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ABSTRACT

A three-year, federally-funded program to train bilingual adult literacy and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teachers to serve immigrants and refugees in the Boston (Massachusetts) area is reported and evaluated. A significant feature of the project was that it trained non-native-English-speaking community members to teach literacy skills and ESL to fellow community members at several centers serving different neighborhoods. The first two chapters describe the project's background, rationale, and structure. Chapters 3 and 4 describe the work of the project, first the training of teaching interns in monthly workshops and then the instruction provided to adult literacy learners. The program at one site that offered Spanish literacy instruction is highlighted in chapter 4. The last two chapters provide an evaluation of the project, including lessons learned and recommendations for future programming. Appended materials include: a description and evaluation of training workshops; sample teacher sharing minutes; sample evaluation tools, and samples of student writing. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project

a collaboration between
The Haitian Multi-Service Center, Dorchester, MA,
The Harborside Community Center, East Boston, MA,
The Jackson-Mann Community School, Allston, MA,
and
The University of Massachusetts at Boston

Final Report

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Introduction

This report documents the work of the Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project (BCLTP), a project which was designed to train bilingual adult literacy and ESL teachers to meet the educational needs of the growing number of immigrants and refugees in the greater Boston area. The project, funded through the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (Title VII), was a university-community collaboration: three community-based adult education agencies in the greater Boston area, the Jackson-Mann Community School (JMCS) in Allston-Brighton, the Harborside Community Center (HCC) in East Boston, and the Haitian Multi-Service Center (HMSC) in Dorchester worked together with the University of Massachusetts at Boston to develop and implement the project.

The underlying assumption of the project is that very often the most powerful resources for addressing the needs of language minority communities come from within those communities themselves, but that these resources often go untapped due to lack of structural support, training, and recognition. Contrary to the traditional view that native speakers of English with advanced degrees are the most qualified teachers of ESL and literacy, the perspective of this project is that the linguistic, cultural and experiential knowledge of language minority teachers can be an invaluable bridge to literacy and ESL acquisition for learners. The primary aim of the project, thus, was to build on existing community and individual strengths by recruiting and training people from the communities of the learners to become literacy instructors in their own communities while at the same time expanding and enhancing the services for adult learners at the collaborating sites. Thus, the central objective of the project was to train bilingual interns (whose first language was not English) through a multi-faceted model which included both university-based training workshops informed by literacy research and site-based practice involving mentor-intern partnerships and teacher-sharing meetings.

In terms of the goal of expanding and enhancing services for language minority adult literacy learners, the project also sought to draw on learners' linguistic and cultural resources by utilizing their first language (L1)[1] oral proficiency as a basis for the development of literacy and ESL; it did this by developing first language literacy as well as bilingual transitional ESL instructional components on a context- and need-specific basis at the sites. Thus, the project included both Haitian Creole literacy and ESL classes at the Haitian Multi-Service Center, Spanish literacy classes at the East Boston Harborside Community Center, and ESL classes at the Jackson-Mann Community School.

Given this community and learner-centered perspective, the project followed a participatory approach to curriculum development in terms of both the processes and the content of training: the approach to training the interns incorporated their

[1]Also referred to as *native language* and *mother tongue* in this report.

experiences, needs and strengths; the interns, in turn, were trained to develop ESL and literacy curricula in a participatory way with adult literacy/ESL students, drawing on their experiences, needs and strengths. Thus, rather than following a predetermined curriculum either with learners or with interns, the curriculum content emerged through interaction with the participating learners and interns.

This report describes the development of the BCLTP project from its initial conceptualization to its impact and implications. The aim of the report is not to provide a blueprint or a prescriptive model, but rather to share what we have learned and how we see our work as potentially relevant for others. Thus, the documentation provided here is intended both as a **final report**, summing up and evaluating our work, and as a **guide** for others interested in adapting this work to their own contexts.

Who we are and how this report was written...

Before proceeding further, a word about who we are and how this report was written is in order. The "we" in this report generally refers to the project staff, the Master Teachers, the Curriculum Specialist, and the Coordinator. In line with the community perspective of the project, each of the three Master Teachers were themselves from the the communities of the learners and interns at their sites: Julio Midy, the Master Teacher at the HMSC, is Haitian; Byron Barahona, the Master Teacher at Harborside, is Guatemalan; and Ana Zambrano, the Master Teacher at the JMCS, is Colombian. In addition, the Curriculum Specialist, Eugenie Ballering, is Dutch and the Project Coordinator, Elsa Auerbach, is a North American whose parents were refugees from Germany.

Although Elsa was primarily responsible for the actual writing of the report, the pronoun "we" is used throughout to indicate that the report incorporates the multiple perspectives and voices of project participants in a variety of ways. The whole staff of the project planned its content and organization together and discussed issues that arose during the course of writing; everyone responded to drafts along the way and contributed sections pertaining to their own work and sites.

The discussion of issues, documentation of training, examples from the classroom and data about student outcomes are based on detailed minutes of weekly meetings of the project staff, as well as minutes of teacher-sharing meetings and workshops. These minutes, written by Eugenie and Elsa, record the voices of the Master Teachers, interns and in some cases, adult learners. In addition, both students' and interns' perspectives were elicited throughout the project through a variety of formats - class discussions, written evaluations, ongoing group evaluations of training workshops, and one-on-one interviews with interns and learners. At the end of the project, Eugenie did intensive interviews with each intern and Master Teacher to document his/her perspective on the project. In addition, since many of the samples of learners' work that were collected throughout the project include reflections on their own learning, learners' voices are also represented through these writings.

In writing this report, we faced two dilemmas. The first concerns language: since this report is about literacy instruction for the least educated and most marginalized people, it inevitably is also about issues of power and social conditions: illiteracy and powerlessness go hand in hand, and discourse practices often are implicated in perpetuating powerlessness. The ways that language is used can either reinforce powerlessness or challenge it. Thus, a frequent question that we discussed was: *Why is it that those who write about literacy often use language that literacy learners cannot understand?* The discourse of literacy pedagogy often excludes the very people who are the focus of its attention. This was doubly relevant for us since the teachers-in-training were themselves from non-traditional educational backgrounds and the training was conducted in their second language. This meant that in our workshops, we constantly attempted to be conscious of whether the language we used was understandable and accessible, whether the terminology and vocabulary were familiar, and whether there was space for translations and reinterpretations.

In some ways this report contradicts these goals and intentions regarding language use: at times it is written in very traditional academic language, framing arguments in the discourse style of researchers, theorists and policymakers. In other words, it uses the language of those in power to talk about those who have the least power in our society. We chose to try to combine a traditional academic discourse style with a more popular one because we thought that our arguments and findings will have more credibility and impact on literacy policy if they are framed to some extent in terms of the debates within the field of literacy research. Our hope is that as those responsible for setting policy and programming become aware of the force of this model, the educational options for language minority adult learners will be expanded.

The second dilemma that we faced concerns the product of our work. In accordance with the increasingly frequent claim by researchers and theorists that programs and instructional approaches must be sensitive to the specific needs of particular ethnic and language groups (Wrigley and Guth 1992), we found that it would be neither feasible nor effective to prescribe a single, pre-determined training design suitable for all contexts. Thus, on the one hand, we couldn't develop a generic training curriculum as the product of our work. On the other hand, we did arrive at generalizable conclusions and did identify significant implications about training processes and content through our work. Thus, rather than presenting our findings solely in terms of outcomes or a training package (for fear that others might try to replicate the surface form of the model), our focus in this report will be in terms of the processes of the development of our model - looking at why we did what we did, at how our thinking and practice developed, and at how we made sense of participants' reactions. Issues and contradictions we faced along the way (like the dilemma about language use) will be integrated throughout the report, because it was the struggle with these issues that was the real motor force of the project, helping us to clarify our perspective and arrive at our conclusions. As such, the product of our work, as presented here, is a process model for developing a context-specific training program which is responsive to the strengths and needs of participating individuals and communities.

How this report is organized...

Part I of the report presents the **background** to the project, starting in Chapter One with our **rationale** for setting it up as we did, describing how the project evolved from initiatives at the community-based sites and situating the various aspects of our model within the broader framework of theory, research and practice. Chapter Two, the overview of the **project structure**, looks at how the collaboration and training were designed as well as presenting background information about project participants - community sites, project staff, interns and students; it focuses on the processes and criteria for selecting community interns.

Part II of the report presents a **description** of the work of the project - what we did during the three-year life of the project - looking first at the **training** of interns in Chapter Three, at the **teaching** of adult literacy learners in Chapter Four, and then at how literacy classes developed at **one site**, the Harborside Community Center, in Chapter Five; this chapter is written by Byron Barahona, the Master Teacher at the site. In the chapter on training, the overall model will be described, as well as its specific components - workshops, teacher-sharing meetings, and mentoring. The section on the training workshops discusses our process for planning them, their content, and reflections based on participants' evaluations. The chapter on teaching begins by describing the classes at each of the three sites and presenting more in-depth profiles of the learners; it goes on to describe and compare the Spanish and Haitian Creole literacy components - how students were recruited, how first language literacy instruction was discussed with students, how curricula and materials were developed, and what instructional issues emerged through the project. We then discuss the transition from first language literacy to ESL - when and how the transition took place, and what happened in the transitional classes. Chapter Five presents an in-depth analysis of the instructional activities in the Spanish literacy component, highlighting the development of students' reading and writing, with examples of their work.

Part III, the **conclusion**, focuses on project **evaluation** in Chapter Six and on **implications and recommendations** in Chapter Seven. The evaluation explores the impact of the project on interns, students, the collaborating sites and the field as a whole. Since this was a training project, focuses in particular on interns' development, analyzing changes in their perspectives on literacy education and classroom practice. The final chapter discusses problems and prospects - structural issues about the program design and recommendations for future programming. It presents implications of our findings concerning training community interns and teaching first language literacy for the field as a whole, putting this project in the broader context of changing directions for the literacy education of language minority adults.

A note on terminology: *Although many kinds of Creole are used in the Boston area (Cape Verdean Creole, Jamaican Creole, etc.), Haitian Creole was the only one used in our project; for this reason, when we use the term "Creole" in this report, it refers to Haitian Creole.*

Chapter One: Rationale for the Project

The situation in the Boston area and surrounding communities is not unlike that in other major urban areas of the U.S.: with changing demographics, more and more immigrants and refugees are seeking ESL and literacy instruction. Adult education service providers report that classes are large, waiting lists are long, resources are limited, and the pressure to move students quickly through programs is great. A growing percentage of adult ESL students have little or no prior schooling, are unable to read and write in their first language, and have minimal oral English proficiency. Classes are usually mixed in terms of level, educational background and language group. Further, because teachers may be unfamiliar with students' first language/cultural backgrounds, initial ESL instruction is a frustrating process for everyone involved: there is minimal teacher-student communication, less literate students remain at the lowest levels for prolonged periods of time, their progress is slow and drop-out rates are high. Teachers report being stymied by the conflicting demands of a diverse group; the more advanced students often report feeling impeded in their progress by the teachers' attention to lower level students. Since funding is increasingly contingent on job placements and quantifiable progress, and the least literate students take more time to show gains or become employable, many programs are forced to turn away these students or relegate them to the waiting lists. The effect is that adult learners most in need of literacy instruction often have the hardest time accessing it, which has severe consequences for their employment possibilities, family income, political participation, and, significantly, their ability to support their children's literacy learning (Vargas 1986).

At the same time, the communities of the learners are rich with people who have strong first language literacy skills, a strong desire to work in their own communities, but limited English skills or educational credentials. They may be people who were professionals (or even teachers) in their home countries, current or former ESL students who have excelled in classes, or leaders in their local immigrant/refugee communities. Because of their own backgrounds, they are intimately familiar with the needs and concerns of literacy students, as well as with issues of cultural and linguistic transition. Very often, however, even as their English improves, it is difficult for them to find meaningful work, or to access higher education. The phenomenon of underemployment is common among this population.

The BCLTP was designed to address the educational needs of the former group of students by drawing on and enhancing the strengths and resources of the latter. The original impetus and rationale for the project came from specific needs identified by participating sites and it built on initiatives that the sites had already undertaken to address those needs. Its design incorporated three key features, each of which was firmly grounded in the histories of prior work at the sites: the first was **training interns from the communities of the literacy learners** who may have lacked traditional educational qualifications but who had demonstrated potential

and commitment to become literacy teachers in their own communities. Each of the sites had a history of hiring bilingual people from their respective communities in various training and teaching positions. Each had participated in a project funded by the Boston Adult Literacy Fund to train community members in teaching and administrative capacities; the HMSC had a Bilingual Teacher Training Project which influenced the design of the proposal for the BCLTP. The second feature was incorporating **first language literacy and bilingual transitional ESL instruction** for adult learners with little prior education and L1 literacy backgrounds in order to utilize their oral language proficiency as a bridge to literacy and ESL acquisition. In the case of the Haitian Multi-Service Center, the need for Haitian Creole literacy instruction had been identified by a group of students and community members; classes had been started on a small scale by dedicated volunteers (constrained by a lack of funding). In the case of the Harborside Community Center, the need for Spanish literacy classes had been identified, but it had not been logistically possible to set them up prior to this project. The third key feature of the project was implementing **a participatory approach to curriculum development** for both interns and adult learners. Again, each of the sites adhered to a learner-centered philosophy of adult education. Thus, the basic underlying rationale for the project arose from the concrete context of the sites: they saw the need for a project which would allow them to carry forward initiatives that they had begun, but were unable to fully implement because of insufficient support. (The specific context of the sites and structure of the project is explored more fully in Chapter 2).

Thus, the project design did not fall from the sky (or emerge from an ivory tower): each of its key aspects was a response to realities confronting the communities of the sites and grew organically from practice at the sites. At the same time, this practice is supported by theory: there is substantial justification for each aspect of the project design from a wide range of sources. The model which the sites developed is supported by recent developments concerning the nature of literacy acquisition in general, and native language, bilingual and ESL adult literacy acquisition in particular. The next section will situate our project design in the context of these developments. It will examine research suggesting why a participatory approach was appropriate, why first language and transitional bilinugal ESL components were educationally sound, and why people with backgrounds similar those of the learners were particularly suited to become literacy teachers.

What view of literacy informed our project?

The past decade has seen significant advances in the theoretical understanding of the nature of literacy, and, in particular, of its culturally and contextually situated nature. There is growing evidence from ethnographic research that "becoming and being literate are processes that can vary across individuals and groups and are shaped by and given meaning by society" (Ferdman 1990: 181) and that literacy must be seen as a "social construction rather than merely a cognitive process" (Anderson and Irvine 1991:79). Studies of literacy practices in a range of cultures indicate variation in types of texts, participant interactions around texts,

purposes for creating and using texts, social meanings/values attached to texts, ways of producing texts, and ways of socializing children through interactions with texts (Heath 1983; Reder 1987, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988, Scollon and Scollon 1981, Scribner and Cole 1981). With this proliferation of ethnographic studies of literacy acquisition and usage in a range of cultural contexts, a new paradigm has emerged in which literacy is viewed not just as a set of isolated decoding skills, to be acquired in an essentially similar universal process, but rather as a set of social practices which vary according to cultures, contexts, purposes, and participants.

Another apsect of this emerging paradigm is that, increasingly, the divide between oral and written language has come to be questioned. While older paradigms claimed that literacy was unique in that it allowed meaning to be represented autonomously, without reference to context, ethnographic studies show that in fact, there are many features of what has traditionally been thought of as oral discourse in written language and vice versa (Tannen 1982). In place of a single universal and autonomous notion of literacy, a new conception of *literacies* has emerged in which a variety of discourse forms represent a range of features of both oral and written language (Street 1984, Gee 1990). Culture-specific relationships between oral and written discourse are seen to influence literacy development: oral language uses shape the way that learners take and make meaning through texts (Heath 1983, Scribner and Cole 1981).

Further, this paradigm focuses on language and literacy acquisition as meaning-making processes in which learners become proficient to the extent that instruction is connected to their own background knowledge, life experiences, and communicative purposes (eg. Wells 1985, Street 1984, Lytle 1991). Reading and learning to read are active, constructive processes as are writing and learning to write: learners bring meaning to texts and make meaning by interacting with texts. Again, culture plays a role in learning: learners' cultural familiarity with the content and forms of texts shape their reading processes (Carrell and Eisterhold 1983).

Finally, recent literacy theory suggests that all views of literacy and literacy pedagogy are framed in systems of values and beliefs which imply particular views of the social order and the ways that literacy positions people in relation to it (Freire 1970, Street 1984). As Gee says, "Discourse practices are always embedded in the particular world view of a particular social group; they are tied to a set of values and norms" (1986:742). As such, according to Street (1984) and Freire (1970), all approaches to literacy are ideological, whether or not the ideology is explicit. Mechanistic approaches to literacy reinforce existing social structures: by denying the variability of literacy practices and elevating the particular practices of mainstream culture to the status of universal standards, they de facto privilege people from the dominant classes (Heath 1983, Street 1984). By focusing on the individual's acquisition of skills without consideration of social context, these approaches disconnect literacy acquisition from learners' knowledge and lived experience. This 'neutral' approach often masks an ideology which reinforces learners' powerlessness and may socialize them for specific and limited roles in the socio-economic hierarchy (Anyon 1980, Auerbach and Burgess 1985).

An alternative approach stresses the connection between the *word* and the *world:* literacy is meaningful for learners to the extent that it enables them to better understand and shape their world (Freire and Macedo 1987). In this approach, developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, instruction starts with the learners' social reality and provides a context for analyzing and acting on it; thus, it repositions learners as subjects rather than objects of both their own learning and their own histories (Freire 1970). While most approaches claim that literacy will lead to a better life, the Freirean approach contends that this better life will come about not just by enhancing individual literacy skills, but by linking literacy acquisition to changing social conditions. Where other approaches often frame literacy as a magic bullet which will in itself will lead to a better life, the perspective of the Freirean approach is that literacy acquisition must go hand in hand with broader social change.

Our project was informed by this emerging understanding of what literacy is and how it is acquired; several aspects of this new paradigm have specific implications for literacy pedagogy and the training of literacy teachers:

1) The culturally and contextually variable nature of literacy: Research indicating that processes of literacy acquisition and use vary culturally suggests that the learning strategies of non-English speakers are likely to differ from those found in middle class, mainstream environments. This means that culture-specific aspects of language and literacy use must be taken into account in literacy programming and curriculum development; specifically, *teachers must be aware of culture-specific discourse practices, literacy uses and forms of learners' cultures wherever possible.* Further, it means that a range of cultural-specific practices are likely to be present in any given class or program. *Teachers must be trained how to work with students to investigate and discover existing ways of using literacy as a base upon which to build* (Auerbach 1989, Weinstein-Shr 1990).

2) The meaning-based nature of literacy: Since literacy acquisition entails not just connecting the spoken word with an abstract symbol system, but acquiring a set of discourse practices and ways of using language, it is critical that instruction be meaning-centered and that content be relevant to the life experiences of learners. This means that *training for interns and instruction must focus on literacy as a meaning-making process rather than only the technical acquisition of skills.*

3) The ideological nature of literacy: Since literacy acquisition and pedagogy are situated in a system of beliefs, values and understandings of the social order which have strong implications for learners' roles outside the classroom, one of the tasks of training teachers is to *assist them to make their own perspectives explicit, to look at how these perspectives were shaped by the socio-political contexts of their own education and to examine the value systems embedded in various approaches to teaching. Similarly, work with students should incorporate dialogue about the socio-political context of their own education (or lack of it) and training should involve exploration of ways to connect literacy instruction with the social issues and concerns of learners' lives.*

Why a participatory approach?

The social-contextual view of literacy outlined above is congruent with recent perspectives from adult learning theory which suggest that adults learn best when instruction is contextualized in their life experiences, related to learners' real needs and when students are involved in determining instructional goals and content (Kazemek 1988, Lytle 1991, Nunan 1988). Their goals and purposes for reading and writing can be expected to vary according to individual and social contexts (Knowles 1984, Street 1984, Lytle 1991). Thus, rather than abstract, decontextualized teaching focusing on isolated decoding skills or generic topics, content must be linked to meaningful, authentic language and literacy use. It must reflect students' everyday reality so that literacy becomes a tool which can enable learners to understand and change their lives. As Lytle says, "being and becoming literate means using knowledge and experience to make sense of and act on the world"(1991:8).

In order to implement this goal, the traditional concept of curriculum development must be abandoned; in the traditional, ends-means model, the teacher identifies the items (eg., skills, grammar, competencies) to be covered in a course before ever coming in contact with students; instruction then is a process of transmitting this information from teacher to students. In place of this model, theconcept of learner-centered and emergent curriculum development is becoming increasingly widespread. The new model involves collaborative discovery of learners' goals and concerns. As Nunan says,

> ...the key difference between learner-centered and traditional curiculum development is that, in the former, the curriculum is a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding content of the curriculum and how it is taught. (1988:2)

This collaboration involves constant dialogue and negotiation at every step of way; Candlin, for example, describes this as an interactive syllabus model

> ...which is social and problem-solving in orientation rather than one which transmits preselected and often predigested knowledge. The model thus becomes one in which participants, both teachers and learners, are encouraged to ask questions from the outset about syllabus objectives, content, methodology and experiences... (1984:34)

North American adult ESL educators have extended this learner-centered model to include content specifically focused on the social context of learners' lives, combining features of Freire's literacy pedagogy and of the emergent approach to ESL curriculum to develop a participatory model for adult ESL literacy (Barndt 1987, Auerbach 1992). This model offers a systematic way of building curriculum around learners' lived experiences and social realities. In it, teachers investigate the real conditions, concerns, wishes and goals of learners with them. As teachers discover

what is important in learners' lives, they utilize a range of tools to teach language and literacy using these issues as content. Participants write their own stories, develop grammar and vocabulary through dialogue about their concerns, identify specific competencies that they need for particular situations, and read about pressing issues that interest them. As one of the interns in our project said, "The students' lives are the curriculum." Because this kind of framework allows for the social context of learners' lives to be incorporated in instruction, it ensures the relevance of the curriculum. As students participate in identifying themes that are important to them, in developing learning tools they will use, and in evaluating what they have learned, they gain a measure of control over their own learning which extends to their lives outside the classroom.

The implications of this work are that: *1) curriculum development for adults (whether in a training or literacy instruction context) must start with the realities, concerns and goals of participants ; 2) one of the adult literacy/ESL teachers' primary tasks is to find important issues from the social context of learners' lives and build curriciculum around these issues; 3) adult learners should be involved in curriculum development at every stage of the process, from deciding the content, methods and processes of instruction to participating in evaluation.*

Why native language literacy and bilingual transitional ESL?

The theoretical framework outlined above suggests that since literate strategies can be embedded in oral language, the oral language should be used as much as possible as a bridge to literacy. This means that teachers must be able to draw on learners' linguistic resources in a culturally appropriate way to the extent possible and teach literate strategies through oral language usage. Further, research on ESL literacy acquisition indicates that strong first language literacy and schooling are key factors in second language/literacy acquisition (Cummins 1981). While this is a widely accepted finding for children's literacy acquisition (and, in fact, has been the basis for the bilingual education movement), it has been less widely accepted for adult literacy acquisition. Adult ESL literacy research, however, indicates that it is equally relevant for low-literate non-English speaking adults (Robson 1981, Klassen 1991, Gillespie and Ballering 1992). It is relevant first because of the difficulties that adult learners face when they try to learn English without being literate in their first language, and, second, because of the positive consequences for literacy and ESL acquisition when they start with L1 literacy classes.

Regarding the first argument, one of the most significant findings from a recent ethnographic study of low-literate Hispanics in Toronto was that while Spanish illiterates were able to function adequately in most domains of their lives, the one area where illiteracy most impeded their functioning was in ESL classes: without first language literacy, ESL classes were virtually inaccessible to these adult learners (Klassen 1991). Students in monolingual ESL classes reported that they had no idea what was going on in their classes; they responded by becoming completely silenced, making virtually no progress or dropping out. The lack of English, in turn affected their ability to find jobs, to support their children's schooling, and has

important negative implications for their self-esteem. Likewise, Strei (1992) found that those with little L1 literacy background and schooling (whether from Spanish-speaking or another linguistic background) are often caught in a "revolving door syndrome" in which learners start a course, fail, start again and eventually give up.

Other studies of people who are not literate in their first language indicate that they are at a double disadvantage: on the one hand, ESL literacy programs often turn them away because their oral English is not adequate and, on the other hand, they often have difficulty functioning in or benefitting from ESL classes because these classes assume literacy (Vargas 1986, Wiley 1990-91). At the same time, however, these studies indicate that those who are literate in their first language (even if they are not literate in English) have advantages over those who are not functionally literate in either language in terms of economic success, political participation and employment. *Taken together, these studies suggest that first language literacy is critical both to economic and political participation as well as to the acquisition of English literacy.*

For these reasons, adult educators are increasingly advocating L1 literacy instruction as a basis for ESL acquisition for low-literate language minority adult learners and transitional bilingual ESL instruction for those with slightly more L1 literacy (Collingham 1988, Rivera 1988). Rivera (1990) outlines various models for incorporating the first language into instruction, including initial literacy in the L1 (with or without simultaneous but separate ESL classes) and bilingual instruction (where both languages are utilized within one class). Although these L1 literacy programs are still few and far between in the U.S. (Gillespie and Ballering 1992), practitioners, researchers and learners involved in them report positive results. According to this preliminary evidence, the first benefit of such programs at the beginning levels is that they attract and retain previously unserved students - students who had been unable to participate in ESL classes because of limited first language literacy and schooling: students who report having dropped out of ESL classes come back to classes when first language literacy is offered. Strei (1992), for example, reports that a pilot native language literacy program for Haitians in Palm Beach County dramatically increased their retention rate once they enrolled in ESOL classes: the drop-out rate decreased from 85% prior to the program to only 10% after it was started. Teachers at Centro Presente, a program for Central Americans in Cambridge offering bilingual ESL, report that many of their current students had previously dropped out of monolingual ESL classes.

A second benefit of using the L1 is that it reduces affective barriers to English acquisition, and thus allows for more rapid progress to or in ESL. Hemmindinger (1987), for example, found that a bilingual approach to initial ESL for non-literate and non-schooled Hmong refugees was more effective than monolingual approaches had been; while students made almost no progress in two to three years of monolingual survival ESL classes, once a Freirean bilingual approach was introduced, progress was rapid. She attributes this in part to the fact that the bilingual approach allowed for language and culture shock to be allieviated. Similarly, in a study designed to investigate the effectiveness of using "pedagogically

unsophisticated" bilingual tutors to teach non-literate Cambodians, D'Annunzio (1991) reports that the students made rapid gains in ESL. Despite a relatively short total instructional time, highly significant results were attained in speaking, reading and vocabulary as indicated by pre- and post-test scores on a number of standardized tests, portfolio analysis, and ongoing informal assessment.

Further, contrary to the claim that use of the L1 will slow the transition to and impede the development of thinking in English, numerous accounts suggest that it may actually facilitate this process (Shamash 1990, Strohmeyer and McGrail 1988). Teachers at Centro Presente report that use of the L1 naturally gives way to increasing use of English. They claim that since students don't just start by thinking in the L2, allowing for the exploration of ideas in the L1 supports a gradual, developmental process in which use of the L1 drops off naturally as it becomes less necessary. These findings from practice are supported by Garcia's more formal research on effective instructional practices which found that academically successful students made the transition from Spanish to English without any pressure from teachers and were able to progress systematically from writing in the native language in initial literacy to writing in English later (1991: 4).

Moreover, as Collingham argues, use of the first language in ESL instruction is effective not only because it allows students' prior linguistic knowledge to be incorporated into the learning of a second language, but because has implications for their roles outside of class:

> To treat adult learners as if they know nothing of language is to accept the imbalance of power, and so ultimately to collude with institutional racism; to adopt a bilingual approach and to value the knowledge that learners already have is to begin to challenge that unequal power relationship and, one hopes, thereby enable learners to acquire the skills and confidence they need to claim back more power for themselves in the world beyond the classroom (1988:85).

Again, these findings concerning use of the L1 are congruent with current theories of second language acquisition, literacy, and adult learning. They show that L1 use reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning, takes into account socio-cultural factors, facilitates incorporation of learners' life experiences, and allows for learner-centered curriculum development. Most importantly, it allows for language to be used as a meaning-making tool and for language learning to become a means of communicating ideas rather than an end in itself. As such, according to Piasecka,

> If the communicative approach is to live up to its name, then there are many occasions in which the original impulse to speak can only be found in the mother tongue....We need to speak in order to sort out our ideas, and when learning a new language this is often best done through the mother tongue (1986: 97).

Finally, this bilingual and native language literacy approach is strongly supported by recent research suggesting that programs must be context- and culture-specific. In their study of promising and innovative practices, for example, Wrigley and Guth (1992) advocate that programs be tailored to serve the particular needs of target groups, including the incorporation of native language literacy where necessary.

Taken together, these studies suggest that literacy in the first language is an essential resource for the transition to second language literacy for low-literate adults. The instructional implications are that *1) where possible and as needed, native language literacy classes and bilingual transitional ESL classes should be offered for these adults; and 2) knowledge of the learners' first languages should be considered an important teaching qualification.*

Why literacy teachers from the communities of the learners?

The final feature of our project which is congruent with a social-contextual view of literacy and a participatory approach to adult education is its focus on training people from the communities of the learners as teachers. While the idea of training people who do not have either traditional higher education or teaching credentials to become language or literacy teachers may seem unusual in the U.S. context, it is neither new nor uncommon in other parts of the world. In the early sixties, for example, a classic study of Spanish literacy acquisition among Mexican Indians found that learners taught by Indians from their own community with little pedagogical training learned to read in both the vernacular and in Spanish better than those taught by native Spanish speakers from the dominant culture with more pedagogical training (Modiano 1968).

Many of the mass literacy campaigns of third world countries are based on the principle that people who know a little more can teach people who know a little less. International organizations like UNESCO promote the strategy of relying on these non-traditional teachers as the only possibility for addressing widespread illiteracy. In Nicaragua, for example, it was the shortage of teachers which initially prompted the campaign to train people who had themselves just learned to read and write to become literacy workers. According to Fernando Cardenal, the Director of the literacy campaign and a poet, this decision "came really out of the pressure of not knowing at that point exactly what to do. But we put our trust in the people and the extraordinary result was that it was incredibly successful and most of these people became very good teachers" (1990:45). In fact, the literacy workers' lack of traditional background was an advantage: they had shared the experiences of the learners and could say, "Look, I learned... so can you." The literacy workers' insecurity, lack of professionalism, and inexperience enabled them to be part of the students, helping them to overcome their fear of learning. In the U.S., we would call this peer teaching; its power comes from the fact that barriers between teacher and learner are broken down.

Preliminary work which has been done in the U.S. suggests that this model is highly relevant for this context as well, and is potentially a powerful new model for

addressing language minority literacy needs. The use of community teachers is particularly promising for adult native language literacy instruction. Beyond the fact that traditionally credentialed teachers may not be available (Anglo teachers may not have the necessary linguistic or cultural qualifications while language minority teachers may opt for elementary or secondary positions because the pay is better), there are a number of reasons why community teachers are particularly suitable. In addition to sharing a linguistic background with learners, their shared cultural background can be a resource, enabling them to draw on culturally familiar discourse forms (eg., fables, proverbs, rules for interaction) and on a common cultural, political and historical knowledge base which can be integrated into learning. Further, their experience as immigrants or refugees, struggling with issues of transition to the new culture, can be a particularly powerful resource for participatory curriculum development since this approach draws on students' linguistic resources and life experiences, building curriculum around the daily concerns students face in the context of their social reality. People from the communities of the learners are in a particularly good position to elicit and facilitate learning around these life experiences because they have shared them. Further, their own experience facing linguistic and cultural challenges enables them to act as role models for students and resources for colleagues trying to understand the issues facing language minority communities.

But what about the appropriateness of this model for ESL instruction? The notion that native speakers of English are the most qualified to teach ESL has become almost axiomatic in TESOL circles. This notion rests on the assumption that linguistic competence is the single most important criteria for successful teaching and goes hand in hand with the assumption that English should be taught entirely monolingually (Phillipson 1992). Increasingly, however, both of these assumptions are being challenged. Phillipson (1992) claims that even those qualities which are seen to make native speakers intrinsically better qualified as English teachers are, in fact, learned and can only be instilled through training. Moreover, he argues, non-native speakers possess certain qualifications which native speakers may not: they have gone through "the laborious process of acquiring English as a second language and ... have insight into the linguistic and cultural needs of their learners" (1992:195). Likewise,Thonis (1990) argues that anyone who teaches language minority students should possess the following qualities:

- awareness of cultural differences
- recognition of language diversity
- knowledge of second language acquisition theory
- understanding of the students' realities
- sensitivity to the values of families
- knowledge of the history and heritage of the group
- recognition of the potential of all students
- willingness to modify instruction as needed
- solid understanding of curriculum imperatives for students learning a second language (19)

Signficantly, six of the nine qualities listed by Thonis may be more readily attributable to people from the learners' cultures than to native speakers of English. The other three (knowledge of L2 acquisition theory, willingness to modify instruction as needed, and understanding of curriculum imperatives) are, as Phillipson says, acquired through training or education regardless of one's language background.

These arguments are presented not to discredit the skills and strengths of monolingual ESL teachers, but rather to show that bilingual teachers have qualifications which, until recently, have been virtually ignored and excluded from consideration. Bilingualism has often been seen more as a disadvantage than as an advantage. A number of recent projects, however, have begun to challenge the view that only credentialed native speakers of English are qualified to teach ESL. D'Annunzio reports on one such project in which "pedagogically unsophisticated" Cambodians were trained to tutor ESL; he attributes much of its success to "the use of bilingual tutors who shared the students' experiences" (1991:52) and argues that, with a short training period, bilinguals (who, in the case of this program, were "only high school graduates") can become effective tutors and trainers of other tutors. He concludes that this model "may break the chain of reliance on heavy professional intervention"(1991:52).

Hornberger and Hardman's (forthcoming) study of instructional practices in a Cambodian adult ESL class and a Puerto Rican GED class corroborates the importance of shared background between teachers and learners. In the case of the Cambodian class, they found that because the teacher herself was Cambodian, 1) the students had the option of using Khmer to respond to her questions and help each other; 2) the teacher and students shared assumptions about the learning paradigm; and 3) classroom activities were intimately connected with learners' other life activities and cultural practices. Likewise, in the GED class, instructional activities were embedded in a cultural and institutional context that integrated and validated learners' Puerto Rican identity. Their study suggests that the reinforcement of cultural identity, made possible by the shared cultural background of learners and teachers, is critical not just for L1 literacy acquisition, but for ESL acquisition as well.

Describing a project at the Quincy School Community Council in Boston's Chinatown, Hooper (1992) makes a powerful case for recruiting and training advanced ESL students as tutors for beginning learners. In his article, "Breaking the waiting list logjam: Training peer tutors for ESL," he reports that the project (called the Take and Give or TAG project) was designed in response to the fact that the program has over 1000 people on its waiting list who have to wait up to four years for a slot in the program. Students who have completed the highest level of ESL but want to continue in the program and expand their ESL proficiency are trained to provide home-based tutoring for students on the waiting list utilizing a beginning ESL video series. According to Hooper, the fact that the tutor and the learner share a common first language and a common immigrant experience enhanced the model. Hooper claims TAG is working not only as an innovative solution to the waiting list logjam, but as a strategy for eradicating barriers to "empowerment, to personal and community resource development, and to self-direction and self-fulfillment...and to communication in English" (4).

Conclusion

In the introduction, we mentioned a concern about the discourse style of this report: the fact that the language of the report is in places geared toward an academic or policy-oriented audience. Clearly, this chapter is one of those places. Moreover, the content of the chapter, complete with references to research and theory, was not part of the ongoing conversations of the project staff. While everyone concurred with the broad outline of the rationale at the outset of the project, it wasn't until the Master Teachers and the Curriculum Specialist read the draft of this chapter that we discussed the research and theory-based aspects of the rationale as a group. We had not spent project time on such discussions because, as soon as the project started, we were immediately immersed in the practical work of recruiting interns, setting up classes, designing workshops and so on. As such, this chapter represents more my own understandings as Project Coordinator.

While the specific content of this chapter was not 'owned' by the entire staff, we shared a vision and basic agreement about the implications of the findings cited in it. These included basic implications about who teaches, what they teach, and how they teach. The following are key implications from research and practice which informed the design of the BCLTP and guided our work as a group:

- literacy instruction must be culturally sensitive and based on teachers' familiarity with learners' culture-specific discourse practices, forms and uses;

- instruction must link oral discourse practices to literacy acquisition strategies;

- literacy acquisition must be viewed not as the acquisition of set of decoding skills, but as a meaning-based process;

- adult literacy curriculum development must be learner-centered and participatory, taking into account learners' own purposes, life experiences, and social roles;

- first language literacy is a powerful and necessary resource for initial ESL literacy and language acquisition;

- people from the communities of the learners are highly suited to implementing instruction based on these principles.

Chapter Two: Project Structure

By definition, collaborations involve a tension between the shared concerns of participants and their differing needs: this duality between the common purposes and the particular conditions of the participating sites shaped every aspect of the structure of the BCLTP. The three community-based agencies that came together with the University of Massachusetts to form the BCLTP shared a commitment to developing the leadership of people from the communities of the learners and to expanding services for learners with minimal prior education and literacy backgrounds. Each had some prior experience in developing this model, but had not had sufficient financial or structural support to sustain these efforts independently. The collaboration, thus, became a vehicle for addressing a need which the sites had already identified and begun to explore. At the same time, however, the conditions at the sites were quite different in terms of the backgrounds of students they served, the kinds of services they offered, the internal structures of the sites, and the relations of the sites to the learners' communities.

Thus, we started with a common vision of what we wanted to do, but the vision had to fit with existing conditions and structures. Although at times the needs of the project as a whole and those of the individual sites seemed contradictory, in fact, this contradiction is precisely the challenge of a participatory and context-specific approach - the challenge of adapting commonly-held principles and processes to differing contexts. As such, a discrepancy between the project plan and its reality was both inevitable and productive.

What this tension meant concretely was that, in terms of the overall design of the BCLTP, while there was an initial clearly formulated plan, it was modified in accordance with changing conditions and the needs of the sites. In terms of teaching, this meant that while the basic approach and processes of curriculum development were similar, the language of instruction and curriculum content varied from site to site. In terms of training, there was a unifying framework and a series of common experiences, as well as a responsiveness to the differences in intern backgrounds and site needs. In terms of project administration, while decisions were made collaboratively and non-hierarchically, there was a differentiation of roles among staff members. Altogether, there was both a general coherence in the overall processes and a flexibility in their application. Our experience, as the following discussion will show, is that this kind of flexibility is critical if a collaborative project is to meet the inevitably different needs of participating sites.

How did the project get started?

The original impetus for the BCLTP came from several sources. A group of community-based agencies in the Boston Adult Literacy Initiative had identified the need to diversify the adult education workforce (which had been predominantly made up of white, Anglo North Americans with undergraduate and/or graduate degrees). A city-wide pilot project (supported by the Boston Adult Literacy Fund) to train people from the communities of the learners as teaching and administrative assistants had been initiated with promising results; however, both the financial and structural support for that project were limited. A number of sites in the Boston area (including the HMSC, the JMCS and HCC) had taken their own steps to train and hire community people into various program capacities, from teachers to counselors and teaching assistants. The HMSC had developed and implemented a Bilingual Teacher Training Project to recruit, train, and place Haitian teachers in its Adult Education Program; as a result of this work, an increasing percentage of the HMSC staff was Haitian and included several former students. The Jackson-Mann had received a grant to train advanced students to become community educators for employment and housing issues. At Harborside, a bilingual Khmer ESL teacher and a Khmer teaching assistant worked together in a bilingual ESL class.

In addition, a growing need for first language literacy had been identified; largely as a result of the Immigration and Refugee Control Act (IRCA) program, a previously hidden population of immigrants with limited educational and literacy backgrounds (many of whom were Central American and Haitian) began to enroll in classes at the sites; these were students who had been too intimidated to come to 'school' until they were required to do so for legalization purposes. It had become increasingly clear to their teachers that lack of L1 literacy was a serious impediment to ESL acquisition, and there were inadequate provisions for teaching them in existing ESL classes. Several additional factors led to an increased interest in Haitian Creole. First was the changing political situation in Haiti, with Creole becoming its official language after the fall of Duvalier. Locally, a Creole linguistics course at UMass/Boston fostered this interest. In addition, a growing number of Haitian refugees was coming to Boston as a result of political and economic instability; many of them had had no opportunity for education in Haiti and needed basic literacy instruction. The HMSC initiated Creole literacy instruction in the late '80's under the guidance of a dedicated volunteer, Marjorie Delsoins.

The Creole class at the HMSC was one of several L1 literacy classes set up by programs around the city in response to the growing awareness of the importance of L1 literacy. Most of these were Spanish literacy classes; many were taught by volunteers who had little or no training. Funding and structural support (space, materials, planning time, etc.) for these classes was non-existent or inadequate. The result was that, despite their successes, they were often unstable, lasting a few months, with frequent teacher and student turnover. At the same time, it was clear that they were necessary for a growing number of students who were unable to succeed in regular ESL classes. As such, the need for funding and teacher training for L1 literacy instruction arose directly from experiences and initiatives originating

at the sites. In the case of the HMSC, it was the commitment and inspiration of the original group of Creole literacy students which led the staff to decide to expand their participation in the BCLTP project to include the training of Creole teachers (rather than to train only bilingual teachers of ESL as originally planned).

Thus, the BCLTP collaboration came about through a combination of factors. The participating programs had already demonstrated the benefits of providing L1 literacy instruction and training teachers from the communities of the learners. The sites which had been involved in a prior collaboration with UMass (including the Jackson-Mann) targeted training community literacy teachers as a priority. The HMSC was interested in stabilizing and institutionalizing initiatives that they had already begun. These interests were integrated into a plan involving three sites: one for Haitian Creole (since this is such a significant population with literacy needs in the Boston area and there are relatively few existing resources on the national level), one for Spanish literacy (since this is the largest language minority language group in the Boston area and nationally) and one for a mixed ESL population (since this is most common model of literacy service provision for language minority adults). We hoped that the inclusion of these three types of sites would allow us to explore the relative merits of training community teachers and providing service in several contexts; in addition, it would address the specific needs for L1 literacy curriculum development of two important populations.

What were the backgrounds of the participating sites and communities?

Each of the sites in the BCLTP has deep and long-standing roots in the communities where it is situated; they are well known among local immigrants and refugees and have long waiting lists for classes. Each has had an adult education program for about ten years and has participated actively in the adult literacy community in the Greater Boston area. They provide a range of services in addition to ESL classes, from counseling to childcare, and, in some cases, health care and legal services. Despite these similarities, it is important to understand the particular contexts of each site because the contexts shaped the content, direction and outcomes at the sites.

<u>East Boston Harborside Community Center Adult Literacy Program</u>

The most striking characteristic of the context of the Harborside Program is the rapidly changing demographic situation in East Boston, where it is located. According to the Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation, the growth rate for Hispanics in the state of Massachusetts between 1970 and 1980 was 11 times faster than that of whites and five times faster than that of blacks; Hispanics accounted for 67% of the total population growth in the state during that period. According to the East Boston Ecumenical Council, 22% of the population in East Boston are refugees and immigrants, many of them recent arrivals from Central American with limited English language abilities and little or no economic resources. The Boston Low Income Neighborhood Survey (prepared for the Mass. Executive Office of Economic Affairs, 1989) found that Hispanic families have the highest poverty

rate of any group in the area. An estimated 20% of the Hispanic adults who seek educational services have less than a fourth grade education and are not functionally literate in Spanish.

The Harborside Community School offers the only free ESL classes in East Boston. Its Adult Literacy Program has been offering basic education services since 1983. It provides three levels of ESL classes and one Khmer literacy class, as well as ABE reading, writing and math - from basic literacy levels through high school equivalency. There are over three hundred adult literacy students enrolled in it annually who come from a broad range of ethnic, linguistic, racial and class lines; of these, 34% are Hispanic. Thus, while the learner population at Harborside is a mixed one, and the agency serves many different ethnic groups, it is clearly the central place in East Boston that Hispanics go for educational services.

In addition to the general increase in numbers of Hispanics in the East Boston area, two factors prompted the Harborside to initiate a Spanish literacy component. The first was the size of the waiting list: despite the fact that applicants come to the Center hoping to begin studying right away because they have immediate survival needs that require improved English skills, there is currently a waiting list for ESL classes that numbers 280 people; applicants must wait from nine months to a year for a seat in a class. The second reason is that this program addresses the needs of a group not traditionally served by ESL classes. At the time of the Amnesty program, Harborside had a large SLIAG program for students seeking to fulfill the education requirement for legalization; during this time, in particular, a previously unserved population of students was identified - those who had never come to ESL classes before because of their limited prior schooling and literacy backgrounds. It was for these reasons - to serve the growing numbers of Hispanics with little prior education and literacy who might otherwise have been relegated to the waiting lists or never come for classes at all - that the Harborside decided to initiate a Spanish literacy component through the BCLTP.

The Haitian Multi-Service Center

Over the past decade there has been an exceptionally rapid growth of Haitians living in the greater Boston area, making it presentiy one of the largest Haitian population centers in U.S. (following Miami and New York). Current estimates place the Haitian population in the state at over 60,000; although towns like Cambridge, Somerville, Randolph and Brockton have growing Haitian communities, the majority of Haitians - up to 25,000 (especially those most in need of ESL and human services) - live in the Dorchester and Mattapan areas of Boston. Despite this continuing increase, the HMSC is the only social service agency that provides educational and social services specifically targeted for the Haitian community. The HMSC is located geographically in the heart of Boston's Haitian community. It is the largest human service agency serving Haitians in Massachusetts.

The mission of the HMSC is to provide survival services and to promote community development and leadership in a culturally and linguistically familiar

context based on a "Haitians serving Haitians" model. Thus, unlike the other sites in the BCLTP, it serves a single population and language group; in addition, it has a broader range of services than the other sites. It currently provides pre-school, pre-natal care, AIDS outreach and education, refugee resettlement, legal services, family counseling, and translation services in addition to adult education. Adult education is its largest component, serving about 275 students daily in 18 classes. The waiting period for regular classes is up to three years and numbers over 400 students.

Classes go on during the morning, afternoon and evening. There is a study center where students can work on their own time, a computer lab, a Center-wide magazine of student writings, and various cultural projects going on at any given time (eg. oral history, youth theater projects, etc). Often students who are unemployed stay at the Center for the entire day, attending classes, studying on their own, working on the magazine or socializing.

Approximately 45% of the students who have applied for classes in the past four years have had less than an eighth grade education; 20% have less than a fourth grade education and are not literate in their native language. About five years ago, a Creole literacy program was started by volunteers to meet the needs of these students. Funding was unavailable since most adult education funding sources required at that time (and still do) that classes be in ESL rather than native language literacy. More recently, with the new influx of refugees since the overthrow of the Aristide government, the numbers of those in need of Creole literacy classes has dramatically increased. Over two hundred refugees arrived at the HMSC from Guantanamo Bay, of whom 60% have less than a fourth grade education and need literacy instruction.

The Jackson-Mann Community School

The primary difference between the Jackson-Mann Community School and the other BCLTP sites is the incredible diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups represented in its classes. According to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) Boston Household Survey for 1985, 20% of households in Allston-Brighton identify a language other than English as their primary language; early indications from the 1990 Census suggest that this percentage is growing. Allston-Brighton is home to 28% of all Hispanics living in Boston, 43% of the city's Russian residents; 26% of the people from other Eastern European countries, 30% of Boston's Asian community and 15% its Brazilian population. The population served in Allston-Brighton is predominantly low-income, including local public housing residents, AFDC recipients, and the working poor. While many of the students in the program hold jobs (and some hold more than one job at a time), most of these are low-wage, entry level jobs: housekeeping, janitorial work, cook and counter positions in fast food restaurants, and assembly line jobs.

The classes at the JMCS reflect the diversity of the area's population: the program serves 450 students per year who come from 25 to 30 different ethnic groups. The program has four components: ESL, ABE, GED, and EDP (an External Degree Program for high school equivalency). There are over 400 adults on the

waiting list to get into ESL classes. The JMCS has never had to actively recruit students since it is well-known among immigrant and refugee communities as a center that offers free quality ESL classes. An estimated 5% of the adults in the ESL classes have less than a fourth grade education in their home countries. Thus, at this site, the need is more for beginning ESL than for first language literacy; further, since classes are linguistically mixed, ESL is the only viable option. Because many of the students are employed, most of the classes are held at night at the JMCS. In addition, the issue of waiting list length has been addressed by having class sizes of up to 30 and involving students as much as possible in assisting teachers and working with other students. Students produce a magazine of student writings and are also involved in various aspects of program governance.

What was the inital project design?

The design in the original proposal involved training four interns per year for three years at each of the three sites to teach initial native language literacy, transitional bilingual ESL, or beginning ESL. Project staff included three Master Teachers (one from each of the sites), a Curriculum Development Specialist, and a university-based coordinator, each of whom worked half-time for the project. The training design in the original proposal included the following:

- a university-based component with **monthly training workshops** on participatory curriculum development and instructional approaches;

- a site-based **mentoring** component consisting of three fifteen-week cycles per year: during the first cycle, interns would primarily observe the Master Teacher; during the second cycle, the interns would assume more teaching responsibility under the Master Teacher's direct supervision; during the third cycle, interns would teach independently in pairs, co-teaching the same class;

- weekly site-based **teacher-sharing meetings** in which Master Teachers and interns would discuss their practice, reflecting on what they had done, sharing concerns or problems and planning for the next week.

This design is congruent with the predominant model for elementary and secondary teacher preparation nationally which combines coursework and practice-based training; it also incorporates the state-of-the-art processes of mentoring and practitioner inquiry (Lytle 1992) which have, until recently, been neglected in adult education teacher preparation.

In terms of project logistics, the interns were to spend six hours per week in class and two hours per week at teacher-sharing meetings (except for the week of the monthly workshop, when there were no site-based meetings). In addition, the Project Staff was to meet bi-weekly to plan the workshops, discuss what was happening at their sites, prepare conference presentations and go over other project business. The project budget included a stipend of $325 per month for ten months

for each intern, as well as half-time salaries of $13,000, $12,000 and $15,000 per year for the Master Teachers, Curriculum Specialist, and Project Coordinator respectively.

Staff members were to share certain project roles and responsibilities, while others varied according to their base of work; shared responsibilities (which everyone was to work on collaboratively) included planning and conducting training meetings, making decisions about project business, participating in conferences and other dissemination activities. In addition, staff had the following responsibilities:

•Each **Master Teacher** was responsible for teaching one class (two hours per day, four days per week) in Creole at the HMSC, Spanish at Harborside, and ESL at the JMCS. In addition, the Master Teachers were responsible for coordinating and supervising the work of the interns at their respective sites; this meant facilitating weekly meetings (see below), administering their respective components, recruiting interns, as well as carrying out site responsibilities (eg., program meetings, working on program publications, etc.).

•The **Curriculum Specialist** was responsible for participating in planning the monthly workshops (doing logistical work like developing handouts, etc.), in documenting the work of the project, and in providing technical and training assistance at the sites as needed. This included traveling between sites to observe and give feedback on the teaching and planning.

•The **Coordinator** was responsible for facilitating the collaboration, administering the grant, coordinating the university-based component, documenting the work of the project, organizing and participating in dissemination, and developing strategies for institutionalizing the project.

Reality intervenes: Implementation during Year One

As a result of circumstances completely external to the project, we were forced to revise the plan outlined above before the project even began: the initial funding that we received was sufficient only to implement the work on a limited scale at one site. The HMSC was selected as the site because of its heavy involvement in developing the model and formulating the proposal. The funding allowed only enough money to hire one half-time staff person and pay stipends to four interns. We decided to allocate this funding to the Master Teacher's position since, without this position, there could be no financially supported Creole component at the HMSC (there would be no one for the interns to work with). The Coordinator's position was paid through another grant secured by the University of Massachusetts.

The Master Teacher at the HMSC during the first year was Jean-Marc Jean-Baptiste, one of the teachers who had begun Creole literacy on a preliminary basis in the mid-1980's. The design of the Project was immediately modified due to the changed conditions: in place of a university-based workshop component (which

had been designed to bring together staff and interns from all of the sites), all of the training took place at the HMSC itself. Elsa (the Project Coordinator) participated in weekly teacher-sharing meetings, during which time she and Jean-Marc facilitated dialogue among interns and presented substantive information about developing materials and approaches; in addition, Jean-Marc presented information about Creole linguistics and literacy (including setting up Saturday trainings with outside Creole experts from the Haitian community). Elsa also did in-class mentoring with interns and co-taught one class.

Since much of the substance of the first year's work (i.e., curriculum development, materials, teaching issues, etc.) is discussed in more depth in the sections on the Creole component and other relevant sections of the report, only a brief mention of what we did during that year is included here. The focus of energy centered on four primary issues: the first two related to Creole instruction, the third to the processes of the training itself and the fourth to project logistics (which, in turn, had implications for training). Each of them previewed issues we would deal with once the project expanded to three sites.

The very first issue that the project had to deal with in the first year was the question of **presenting Native Language Literacy** to students and the process of legitimating it in their eyes. Since most of the students came to the Center expecting ESL classes, and because Creole has historically been stigmatized for political reasons in Haiti, many students were uncomfortable about the idea of Creole classes. The way that this issue was addressed is discussed in Chapter Four; the important point, however, is that by the end of the first year, not only had Creole instruction been fully accepted as a legitimate part of the Center's program, but students were anxious to get into Creole classes and sometimes reluctant to leave them. The Creole component had become integrated into the regular offerings of the HMSC.

The second instructional issue that we dealt with was the issue of **materials**: since literacy instruction in Creole is relatively recent even in Haiti, there are few materials available; most of those that are available are difficult to obtain in the U.S., and their content is largely geared toward a Haitian social context. Thus, we had to struggle with the issue of whether to use published Creole materials, which ones to use, how to use them and what else to use. Again, this is an issue which will be discussed in more depth in Chapters Three and Four. However, again by the end of the first year, a strategy for dealing with this issue had been established.

The third issue which we grappled with was the issue of how to proceed with the **training**. Since there was no university-based component, the training took place entirely through mentoring and our weekly teacher-sharing meetings. As Project Coordinator and Curriculum Specialist all wrapped into one, I felt the responsibility of providing substantive input about approaches, processes, tools, and techniques. However, we also needed time to talk about what was happening on a day-to-day basis in classes. Very often I would come prepared with a carefully sequenced interactive, participatory activity to model a particular process or technique (eg., the Language Experience Approach). Everyone would become engaged in the activity and there would be active discussion. However, the next

week, or during observations, I would notice that people were not actually using the technique in their classrooms. There seemed to be a gap between what I was introducing and the discussions about classroom practice.

Little by little, I stopped bringing in my 'lesson plans' for the sessions; we started each meeting by going around the room, with everyone (including Jean-Marc and myself) presenting what they had done and the issues or problems they were encountering in their teaching. I attempted to shift my role to one of identifying common issues - naming what I perceived as similarities between the intern's concerns (for example, everyone seems to be struggling with how to get students to participate more or how to integrate mechanical and meaningful activities). Jean-Marc or I would then elicit everyone's strategies for addressing the problem at hand: in this context of sharing ideas, Jean-Marc and I would also contribute our own ideas. The following week, we might bring in examples of how others had dealt with the issue or an activity to illustrate how interns might deal with it. Framing the 'training' in the context of needs/concerns identified by the interns and drawing out everyone's ideas of how they might be addressed seemed to be more effective: interns began trying out ideas that we had discussed in the meetings. In addition, this process resolved the tension around our various roles (in particular the tension around Jean-Marc and me being the 'experts'). Because our contributions were based on direct classroom experience, they had more legitimacy. Through this process, everyone had a voice and some of the implicit hierarchies began to be broken down. This **problem-posing approach** became the model for future teacher-sharing meetings.

The fourth issue we dealt with was the **logistical complexity** of balancing interns' backgrounds and schedules, and the sites' needs, with our training plan. First, the interns came from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from having been involved in literacy work in Haiti to having no experience in teaching; this meant that their training needs and strengths were quite different. Some needed a great deal of support, while others were able to work more independently right from the start. Second, classes took place in the morning and evening (and interns worked other jobs while they were not at the Center). This meant that it was difficult to find one time when everyone could meet together. Third, the waiting list for classes was so long that the Center wanted to move the interns into teaching their own classes as quickly as possible. The result was that, right from the start, our concept of three cycles of training (moving from observation, to supervised teaching in the Master Teacher's class, to independent teaching) had to be modified. From the beginning, those with more experience took on more responsibility, even in some cases beginning by teaching their own classes with supervision. In addition, one intern was unable to participate regularly in the weekly meetings, so she received additional in-class training. This logistical complexity turned out to be the rule rather than the exception throughout the life of the project. *What we learned is that there are many routes to the same goal: the need for flexibility in responding to the particular conditions of the site was one of the most important lessons of the year.*

Adapting the plan to reality: Implementation during Years Two and Three

After the first year of the BCLTP, we were funded to implement the project as originally planned, with three sites, a Curriculum Specialist and a Project Coordinator. At around this time, Jean-Marc was chosen to be the Executive Director of the HMSC so a new Master Teacher had to be hired at the HMSC. Thus, we began in October 1990 with a virtually new staff and group of interns (except at the HMSC, where several of the interns continued). In order to maintain continuity at the HMSC, I continued to attend the weekly teacher-sharing meetings at the HMSC. The first three months after the new funding began was devoted to hiring the new Master Teachers and Curriculum Specialist, consolidating this core group of staff (discussing our own practice and approaches to literacy, as well as our conceptions of training), recruiting interns, and planning the initial training sessions. The new interns began their training in January, 1991; the first University-based workshop was in February.

Once again, we found that we had to shape our plan according to the exigencies of each site. Depending on the structures and histories of the project component at the sites, the particular training schedules and start-up tasks differed. Because the Spanish literacy component at Harborside was geared toward a previously unserved population, one of the first tasks there was to recruit students as well as interns. The process of recruitment is discussed in Chapter Four. In addition, Byron, the Master Teacher, spent a good deal of time networking with others in the city who had some experience with Spanish literacy, hearing how they set up their programs, what they did in class, and what problems they faced. He did extensive community outreach as well as collecting materials and curriculum ideas. He made a conscious choice to start small with the Spanish literacy component, working with one class as the basic unit and building on this experience. Each intern worked alongside Byron for two nights a week, alternating nights. Chapter Four describes more fully how this process developed so that, by the end of the project, there were three classes in this component - a beginning literacy class, an advanced literacy class, and a bilingual transitional ESL class.

At the Jackson-Mann Community School, because the interns would be working in existing ESL classes, there was no need to recruit students; in addition, since three of the four interns were themselves former students from the program (and the fourth had been a tutor there), they were already familiar with the functioning and philosophy of the program, as well as with the teaching style of Ana, the Master Teacher. Thus, during the first cycle of training, while they dutifully spent several weeks observing, they felt uncomfortable in this role and wanted to jump right in with assisting in the class. Nevertheless, as time went on, their sense of readiness to teach varied considerably: while some of them felt confident enough to begin teaching with a co-teacher after six months of the training, others did not. In other words, we could not impose the three-cycle schedule rigidly without taking into account how ready they felt for independent teaching.

At the HMSC, because of the prior existence of the project, the interns' backgrounds, and the level of demand for classes, several interns were able to teach independently without going through the full three cycle process: they taught their own classes with guidance and training through the regular weekly meetings; in fact, during a short period after Jean-Marc left and before Julio was hired, the Creole program was able to sustain itself without a Master Teacher.

Finally, the notion of two discrete years of the project, each with a common group of interns who started and ended at the same time, following much the same sequence of training, didn't correspond to the reality created by program, individual and funding constraints. The pacing of intern recruitment varied from site to site. Interns came and left at different times, depending on when the hiring of Master Teachers, recruitment of students and interns was completed; in addition, some interns left before their year was up because they found full-time jobs whose hours conflicted with their teaching time; others stayed beyond the end of their year because there wasn't enough time to train someone new before the funding was scheduled to run out. A major concern about the project design (which will be discussed more fully in the conclusion) was that, just as interns got trained and became proficient teachers, they had to leave the project because of its one year limit on internships. Because of funding constraints, the sites were not always able to hire them into regular positions (although in many cases, they did get regular teaching jobs). In some cases, we chose to extend their term of training in order to address this problem, especially during the final year when it would have been impossible to recruit new interns for the few remaining months of the project. *In summary, our sense was that the effectiveness of the implementation depended to a large extent on our capacity to be flexible, rather than to impose the proposed plan rigidly.*

Who were the Master Teachers and how were they selected?

Since our hope was that the project would be as fully integrated into the work of each site as possible, participants in the collaboration decided early on that the Master Teachers would come from the existing staff of the sites and be selected by the sites. The primary selection criteria were experience in teaching beginning level ESL literacy students, strong ties to the communities of the learners, leadership in the process of diversifying the site staffs and commitment to participatory, community-based education. Like the interns, they were to be bilingual and bicultural; their formal credentials were less important than their ability to serve as role models to the interns, people who themselves had come from non-traditional teaching backgrounds, had overcome obstacles and become effective teachers.

Jean-Marc Jean-Baptiste, the first Master Teacher at the HMSC and one of the originators of the project, is from a large family of refugees who came from Haiti in the 1970's. The extent to which he is part of the community of the learners is evident in many ways. Like many Haitians, a number of his family members work in the service sector in Boston; his mother, for example, works in a nursing home, and was one of Jean-Marc's Creole students (she had never had the opportunity to learn to read and write in Haiti). He worked himself through school, earning first a

Bachelor's Degree and then a Master's degree in Bilingual Education from UMass/Boston. He taught ESL at the HMSC, started a Creole class on a volunteer basis at the HMSC in the mid-1980's, and was Co-Director of the HMSC Adult Education Program. At the end of his first year as Master Teacher in the BCLTP, he was appointed Director of the HMSC, an event which was celebrated by a special mass at St. Leo's, one of Boston's Haitian churches.

in the news 8:90 Jean Marc Jean-Baptiste

Jean Marc Jean-Baptiste has been appointed director of the Haitian Multi-Service Center in Dorchester.

Jean-Baptiste, a native of Haiti, received his master's degree from UMass/Boston in bilingual education.

He has worked at Catholic Charities' Haitian Multi-Service Center since 1984 as an educator, counselor and supervisor.

In collaboration with UMass/Boston, Jean-Baptiste currently supervises the Bilingual Teacher Training and Native Language Literacy program at the university.

He has advised Haitian students from Roxbury Community College through its Haitian internship program and supervised Haitian and neighborhood youth workers in a neighborhood collaborative youth project.

Before joining the Boston Archdiocese-run center, Jean-Baptiste, a Randolph resident, did child welfare work at the Boston Juvenile Court, where he investigated Haitian family abuses cases pending court decisions.

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"This is my dream.."

Julio Midy, the second Master Teacher at the HMSC, has worked as an ESL teacher at the HMSC since 1985. Like Jean-Marc, he was an undergraduate at UMass/Boston and is currently preparing to enter a Master's program. He worked for many years in the Haitian Bilingual Program of the Boston Public Schools. It was his first UMass teacher, Carol Chandler (who is also Adult Education Coordinator at the HMSC), who invited him to work at the Center. Julio came to the U.S. more than ten years ago. Like many of his students, he started out his worklife in the U.S. in a minimum wage factory job, boxing pillows for $3.00 an hour (and seeing the same pillows selling for $21.00 apiece at a fancy department store!). Julio's ties in the Haitian community go beyond his work at the Center - he has his own Creole radio show in Boston and is a a leading Haitian soccer organizer (and player) in the Northeast.

Julio sees his work as a Creole teacher as a concrete way to contribute to his community. In an interview with Eugenie, he talked about why he is a literacy teacher:

> I have to tell you that I love Haiti, but saying that doesn't mean anything if you don't do anything concrete to prove your love. I love education for two reasons. First, even though I don't make much money, I don't make the money I'd like to make, I get paid for it. And also, it gives a chance to help my own people. It's like killing two birds with one stone - that's the reason why I really do love it. I'm working with my people and I'm doing it as my job.

A constant theme in Julio's work is his sense of how literacy is tied to the changing political situation in Haiti and that his work is part of a larger struggle for a better world. When Eugenie asked him why he chose to do education work rather than law or social work, he responded:

> The reason why is that we have this unequal world, this world where people are exploiting other people. Just because some people don't really have the knowledge, some people don't really have any education - it's easy to exploit them. So, I think, as a teacher... I reduce the rate of illiteracy; therefore the lawyer will have less to do. If you want to talk about change, you have to educate your people.

It is this committment to a better world which is the driving motivation for Julio's teaching. His words here capture the sentiment expressed, in one way or another, by each of the Master Teachers in the project.

> The last thing I would like to say is that I hope one day we'll not have to talk about literacy in the world. Because, like I always say, illiteracy is the result of exploitation. So I think everybody has a right to know

how to read and write. If you know how to read and how to write, if everybody knows how to read and write - definitely we would have a better world. This is my dream.

"This was the chance for me to do something...."

Byron Barahona, the Master Teacher at Harborside, came to the U.S. from Guatemala in the mid-1980's. In fact, he and Ana, the JMCS Master Teacher, were students together in a church-based ESL program in East Boston in 1985. He went on to become a UMass undergraduate, majoring in Philosophy and Spanish and French Literature. He had decided to leave his country after receiving a Baccalaureat and a draftsman's degree there. Relatives helped him to come to the U.S. where he had intended to continue his studies. At first, however, the barriers were many: despite his education, he had to take menial jobs (busing tables, cleaning jobs, etc.) to support himself. He talked about these experiences with Eugenie:

> I remember cleaning this office where people were draftsmen and I looked at all the plans they were drawing. It was a really frustrating moment because there I was cleaning the office of people whose job I knew how to do. I sort of resented it to have left what I protected so much for a while. So it had great impact on me; I would never forget that moment...

Byron began working as an ESL teacher at Harborside during the Amnesty program. For Byron, the work in the BCLTP was a natural extension of that work, a chance to address a need that hadn't been addressed effectively in this earlier work:

> I had been working here for two years before this project came along. I used to teach English. I was in charge of the Amnesty project... A lot of people who came didn't know how to write and read. And there were many people, like 25 students per class, we just didn't have the time to devote to those people. So we did it individually but not in a way that we could have better helped them. So, we had that experience before this project came along... Then [through this project] we had the opportunity to both meet the needs of the people who didn't know how to write and read and also I had already myself had that exposure. And this was the chance for me to do something...

Like Julio, Byron saw his work tied to people gaining more control of their lives:

> I believe that education is one means for people to either improve their lives, or at least realize why they find themselves in the place they are. It gives me a lot of satisfaction to see that people can do something about their lives - changing them in the way they want. I was being a kind of assistant in that endeavor.

Byron also saw the project - with its focus on training, its collaborative framework, and its university connection - as a way to extend his own education and thinking.

> Teaching - I saw it as a way to continue that intellectual pursuit, to be able to communicate with other people, to exchange ideas, to be in that kind of environment.

Thus, it would allow his own development to come full circle, giving back what he himself had gained through education:

> There is so much that I learned on my own because I read a lot. I think it would be too bad if I did not share that with other people. That is one of the main reasons - sharing knowledge with other people, and, as we have learned through this project, we always learn from the students as well.

"People are misunderstood and abused..."

Ana Zambrano, the Master Teacher at the Jackson-Mann Community School, came to the U.S. from Colombia in 1984. She has dealt with issues relating to literacy throughout her life, in various ways, and for her, this project was a natural extension of her development as a learner and a teacher. Like Byron and Julio, she started as an ESL learner in one of Boston's adult ESL programs; she enrolled as student at a church program in East Boston and just a year later got a teaching position at the JMCS. Her background in Colombia as an adult educator had laid the foundation for this quick transition to teaching.

From her earliest childhood, issues of literacy were important in Ana's life. She spent her childhood on a farm, in a family where her grandmother didn't know how to read and write, but her father read a lot; theirs was the only family in a fifty or sixty mile radius that owned books. She learned how to read at age 7 and her reading took her out of "reality as a child of a farm family with so much poverty and misfortune around." As a teenager, she worked in a literacy campaign which trained people from the community to teach basic skills. Ana then moved to Bogota and worked in a mothers' cooperative for three years. She told Eugenie how her experiences in these two settings influence her own approach to teaching:

> When I taught farmers, we used farmers' tools which were right around us. The [literacy] part only came in when you knew the tool... People could relate it immediately with what they were doing. It was very real, very relevant. In Bogota, the curriculum we developed was around children, and taking care of the children. The women were all working mothers who had children and basically nothing to live on. So the curriculum was that. So it was the reality, one more time, it was completely there.

But when Ana first started learning English in the U.S., she was confronted with a completely different approach to education:

> I learned English in a place where the teachers were all North American college students. So there was a kind of confusion for me when I came in because the people who had taught me English were people who had nothing to do with me or with my reality as an immigrant working at a warehouse. I had taught literacy and so all the values I had gotten from that, all the pride I had gotten was somehow shaken or vanished to some extent by being taught by this group of young North Americans from the most expensive universities here, with completely different socio-economic backgrounds than mine.

Thus, when Ana became a teacher, she went through a long struggle in moving toward a participatory approach. Her first instinct when she began teaching ESL was to follow the approach that her own ESL teachers had used:

> So I was in the middle of trying to weigh if what I had done in the past had anything to do with learning. I valued so much what [my ESL teachers] did because I had learned a lot. They gave me this book to read and I read. In the beginning it was hard to make sense of both worlds. In the beginning I tried to dismiss what I had done in the past and I tried not to relate it to my teaching at that moment. I tried just to follow the rules.

But at the same time that Ana was teaching, she was working as a counselor and advocate. This work, in combination with her participation in a critical thinking project, prompted her to re-examine her views:

> But after a few years of confusion, I started to listen better and to look at people's realities in a more humane way... My own assumptions about people who came to this country were being completely challenged by people's realities in my advocacy and counseling job. I could see that reality right with my own eyes every single day. If I saw these realities, what was so different in the classroom? Why did I address those things in the classroom in such a different way? This started me in the process of thinking. I think I started to be much more myself again. I had to go through this cultural clash/shock. In Colombia, I was called a community leader...After that I started really looking at what the community needs, what they want... And that has been a switch in my teaching for a few years. And it becomes clearer every cycle, and it changes according to the group, and it changes according to the make up of the class. This doesn't necessarily mean that everybody is happy with this approach, but I feel it ism more effective.

Ana's motivation for becoming involved in this project stems from her desire to teach people to advocate for themselves, to defend themselves and to be less dependent on others. From her earliest days as an ESL student, she had taken on the role of assisting people to get what they needed. When Eugenie asked what made her continue in education, she said:

> It's as simple as this: by the time I was learning English, I was already going places with people to request services and helping them with translations. I knew tons of people and kept meeting more people who were misunderstood, abused, because they don't speak the language. I thought if I had learned, everybody else could and in this way learn to defend and advocate for him/herself.

Thus, for Ana, learning English was part of the process of becoming independent, being able to advocate for yourself and your community. Someone had taken the time to do this for her, so she wanted to do it for others. As with Julio and Byron, she saw this work as very much tied to the fight for social justice.

> Somebody did the work of teaching me. Now I could teach somebody else not to depend on somebody. I know for me [knowing the language] made the difference so it should make a difference for other people. That kept me in teaching. And it is bascially an instinct in me to fight against injustice.

Being in a position to train others (most of whom had been her own ESL students) gave Ana a special sense of purpose in this project. On the one hand, it gave her the sense that her work was having a much greater effect on students' lives:

> Now, by having the interns, I see the efforts multiply by five. And there is much more of an impact on people's lives with five people directly involved. It will help them in the future to teach or guide their lives. It makes me feel that my work is much more important.

On the other, feeling comfortable about being a trainer gave her a new sense of pride in herself and enabled her to see her own teaching in a new light:

> I have learned and see much better what I know... Before I didn't think that I knew that much. I know now that I really know a lot about this stuff... When I see the interns teaching, I'm observing myself. The new teachers have made me reflect a lot on what I do and how I do it. Who did she/he learn this from? Where did he/she learn this? There are times you feel so proud! Other times you see your own mistakes so clearly you want to hide! ... So I know I can be a good trainer. But it is a continuous reflecting exercise.

Thus, while the particular paths leading the Master Teachers to the BCLTP were different, they shared many underlying motivations. They each had come to the project with a strong sense of love for and committment to their communities and saw the project as a way of giving back what they had gained through their own education. For each, the project was a way of doing something that they felt was deeply meaningful and getting paid for it at the same time; even more, they saw it as a way to extend their own education while contributing to that of others. In addition, all of them situated their work in the context of a larger process of social change. The power of the Master Teachers' life experiences was not just that they could empathize with students' situations because they had been there, but that they were living examples of moving beyond this kind exploitation.

How were the interns selected?

As with the Master Teachers, selection of the interns was done by the sites through their own networks of contacts. The original proposal had stipulated four kinds of people who might be recruited as interns:

1) Former teachers or literacy workers from the communities surrounding the sites who have strong first language educational backgrounds but may be unable to secure jobs in a related field here due to lack of sufficient English proficiency or U.S. credentials. The project would give them the opportunity to utilize their previous training and background in the process of developing ESL proficiency and upgrading skills relevant for employment in the U.S.

2) Advanced ESL students currently enrolled in collaborating sites who have excelled in their own language learning, have expressed an interest in working with lower levels, and have shown a commitment to furthering their own education and community service. The project would enable them to gain professional skills in the process of developing their own language and literacy abilities. It might lead to higher education for some.

3) Undergraduate students from UMass or other local universities who want to contribute to their communities; these might be bilingual students who are eager for opportunities to 'give back' what they have gained in the form of community service. For these students, the training program would offer the chance to develop skills which draw on their cultural, linguistic and educational strengths.

4) Community leaders who have expressed a strong commitment to the educational development of their communities. These might be individuals who have emerged as parent, housing or health advocates in their own communities (who may or may not have prior ties to the collaborating sites) and express a desire to serve in these communities; this group may also include people employed at the collaborating sites in non-educational capacities who want to assist in the educational development of the people they serve.

The actual process for recruiting interns varied from site to site. At the HMSC, for example, there seemed to be an ongoing stream of people from the community volunteering to work in the Adult Education Program. Some of these people had had experience in Haiti's literacy campaign; others were students from local universities who wanted to become involved; still others were active church members who wanted to provide service. Two had non-teaching jobs at the HMSC and wanted not just to support the teaching, but to participate in it. Finally, because of the HMSC's strong ties to UMass (through Carol Chandler's dual role as Adult Education Coordinator at the Center and UMass ESL instructor/Student Literacy Corps Coordinator), a number of UMass undergraduates also became tutors. At the JMCS, all but one of the interns were drawn from a pool of advanced ESL students in the program who showed exceptional promise; they had started originally in beginning ESL at the JMCS and progressed through the most advanced level. Because of its history and commitment to training advanced students to work in the program in a variety of capacities, there was a natural evolution from student to intern at the JMCS. In addition, one UMass undergraduate who had tutored at the JMCS through the Student Literacy Corps became an intern. In East Boston, interns were recruited through personal and community networks in the local Central American community. In one case, an intern had contacted the Harborside school to get training because he wanted to set up his own church-based literacy group.

In each case, when a potential intern was identified, the Master Teacher went over the requirements, schedule and objectives of the project, as well as getting a general sense of the intern's potential. Then a more formal interview took place; the following factors were considered in selecting interns:

- the candidate's reasons/motivation for wanting to become an intern
- background and experience in literacy work (if any)
- views on education and literacy
- attitudes toward learners
- relationship to the community of the learners
- knowledge of Creole/Spanish literacy or ESL (depending on the placement)
- current schedule (time availability)

In retrospect, we have had many discussions about which criteria were most important in determining the success of candidates. For example, we have discussed whether it seemed to be an advantage or a disadvantage for an intern to have had prior teaching experience. In some cases, we found that interns (particularly those who had been elementary teachers) had to unlearn traditional ways of relating to students and teaching literacy (some had a very mechanical and bottom-up approach to literacy); in other cases, however, having a teaching background allowed interns to jump into teaching with ease and confidence, contributing their experience to the knowledge of the group.

Another issue we discussed was the role of the intern's ideology or world view: since the project was participatory in its orientation, and instruction was

aimed toward connecting literacy with the social context of students' lives, did this mean that interns needed to share, at least to some extent, a social change perspective when they came into the project? Again, we found no clear cut answers. In one case, a project participant who had a very clear and overt ideological orientation attempted to impose his view on his students and got angry when they didn't agree with him (which in turn caused such an uproar that he resigned). On the other hand, many of the interns came into the project with no clear sense of any relationship between literacy and social issues; they saw their work as teaching a useful skill. Yet, by the end of the project, this perspective had changed; in fact, one of the most compelling questions that we explored and struggled with through the project revolved around how we each understood the relationship between 'politics' and literacy and what the implications of this relationship are for teaching (this is discussed in depth in the section on training). Thus, we found it wasn't always an advantage to have a social change perspective and it wasn't necessarily a disadvantage not to have one. What seemed most important, rather, was the intern's general stance in regard to learners - that they have a respectful attitude rather than a paternalistic one. While the content of their political beliefs didn't need to be articulated in a particular, predetermined way, it was important, as Ana said, that interns present themselves as fighters - people willing to take on struggle and advocate on behalf of themselves and students. Within this framework, we were able to problematize the issue of social change, making it a subject of inquiry and dialogue rather than a prerequisite for participation. In fact, the differences in opinion helped push forward everyone's thinking. As Byron said, it was important to have diversity and disagreement within the group.

A related issue concerned the role of the intern's religious beliefs. In a number of cases, either people wanted to become interns to fulfill a sense of mission or their religion was so central to their thinking that it permeated their view of how to teach literacy. We were concerned that these beliefs might shape their teaching both in terms of processes (attitudes toward students) or in terms of content (imposition of religious ideas). In reality, however, these fears were realized to a very limited extent and in only one case (where the intern seemed to view her students more as poor victims needing to be 'saved' and where her own religious commitments sometimes got in the way of her teaching). In most cases, interns treated their beliefs as personal matters which they chose to share or not share like any other ideas. In no cases did they impose their beliefs; rather, these beliefs seemed to strengthen their commitment to working with students. In one instance, a potential candidate was not able to become an intern because his religion wouldn't allow him to participate in Saturday training workshops which were central to the work of the project.

Likewise, the role of motivation for being an intern was less than clear cut. In general, our view was that interns needed to be motivated by a real committment to their communities and a desire to contribute. Nevertheless, because interns were paid a stipend for participation, a potential motivation was the additional income. While we tried to screen out anyone who was participating primarily for the sake of

the money, it became clear that a few of the interns saw the project as an interesting way to make some extra money. Interestingly, however, at least in one case, an intern who came in with this attitude became so involved and committed through the course of the project that she decided to volunteer to continue teaching after the funding ran out.

Even knowledge of the target language turned out not to be a bottom-line requirement for the Creole component. Since French has traditionally been the medium of instruction in Haiti, many highly literate Haitian adults have not had the opportunity to study Creole. Thus, two of the interns who were highly qualified in other ways had to learn to read and write in Creole themselves (through Creole workshops and intensive independent study) to prepare for teaching.

Thus, we have not been able to distill a single list of intern qualifications or criteria that are predictive of success: our experience has been that people with very similar surface qualifications can have very different experiences as interns, and, likewise, people who have quite different backgrounds can meet with parallel successes. In other words, there are many routes that interns take and it's not always predictable from the inital interview or analysis of qualifications what the potential of a particular candidate will be. Rather, there seems to be a complex set of factors that interact, including attitude, prior experience, willingness and openness to learning, and flexibility. In fact, part of the strength of the project was precisely that people started from different places and learned from each other. People who had weaknesses in one area often had strengths in another and were able overcome weaknesses through the work of the project itself. Having said all of this, and despite the variability, there are a few bottom-line generalizations we can make about recruitment of interns:

- A key factor in determining the interns' effectiveness is participation in training meetings; their schedules must allow them to attend both site-based planning meetings and training workshops. This needs to be clearly stated at the outset.

- Risks can be minimized by recruiting candidates who know and are known to the site - who have a strong track record as a student, staff member, or volunteer.

- Interns' attitudes are key in determining effectiveness: they must show respect for students and openness toward a participatory approach, and be motivated not out of a paternalistic desire to help the "poor illiterates" but out of a desire to strengthen their community and fight the injustices it faces. Complete agreement about perspectives is not necessary, but willingness to exchange ideas and learn is.

- Recruitment is a two-way process: what we say to interns is just as important as what they say to us in the initial interview. The more open and informative we are about the expectations and approach, the more we will get a sense of the intern's interest and potential. Being open at the beginning will prevent difficulties later and set the tone for a relationship of mutual learning.

Who were the interns and why did they want to participate in the project?

The hallmark of the group of interns that were recruited to the BCLTP was its diversity. Participants came from Haiti, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Colombia. They ranged in age from their early twenties to retirement age. As the chart below indicates, their educational background varied: some had university degrees from their home countries, others had baccalaureats[1] or had not completed high school there; one had been a pre-med student. Many had come as recently as 1989 and had enrolled in beginning ESL classes at the participating sites upon arrival. Some were in the process of receiving their GED while they were interns; others were enrolled in community colleges or universities. In terms of occupations, many had been professionals in their homelands (engineers, computer programmers and educators). In addition to those who had been teachers in their home countries, some had worked in their countries' literacy campaigns; others had been involved in related aspects of literacy work (eg., as broadcaster for the radio show of a literacy campaign); one had been the director of an adult education school. Once they arrived in the U.S., almost all of them had to work in unskilled entry-level jobs; many of them were working in factories, hotels, restaurants or housecleaning during the day while they were participating in the project at night.

Intern Profiles

Countries of origin	*Backgrounds in home country*	*Occupations in the US*	*Contact/relationship with site*
Haiti Honduras El Salvador Brazil Guatemala Colombia	students: high school medical school college computer engin. teachers: day care elementary secondary adult education literacy campaign worker radio show host computer programmer Director of school	security guard car mechanic factory worker students (GED, ESL, college, commmunity college) house cleaner hotel room service worker dishwasher bookkeeper pizza deliverer adult ed center work: receptionist in-take worker child-care worker women's shelter worker	community volunteer UMass tutor receptionist at site GED student at site ESL student at site family contact of Master Teacher women's shelter worker church choir leader

[1] This degree does not have an exact equivalent in the U.S. but is somewhere between a high school degree and a college degree.

"We know each other...."

The situation of Roberto, the most recent intern to join the project, is in some ways typical of that of many of the interns. Roberto is a former Harborside ESL student who came to the U.S. from El Salvador in 1989. While in El Salvador, he had gotten a degree in computer programming and was a computer operator. When he first arrived in the U.S., he knew almost no English; he got a part-time job as a security officer at the airport. Currently he works in room service at a major downtown hotel and is enrolled at a community college. He would like to study to become a teacher. When Eugenie asked him why he wanted to become an educator, his response was, "I wanted a change - because with a computer, I help nobody. The computer doesn't give me anything. People are nicer."

Roberto contacted Harborside when he heard that there was a Spanish literacy program there because he wanted to begin teaching literacy with a group at his church. He asked if he could observe Byron's class; through the initial discussions, Byron felt that his perspective on literacy was compatible with that of the project; when asked how he would teach his class, given that he hasn't taught before, Roberto's response was that he felt it is important to take students' lives into account and build the lessons around what they want/need.

A number of themes emerged as interns talked about their reasons for wanting to teach literacy/ESL. One theme, which Roberto discussed, was the notion of identifying with and feeling responsible for one's community. Thinking back at the end of the project about what had brought him to the project, he said that because he knows the problems of people from his country, he feels he can help them: "[People from other countries] don't know how we feel and what we can do here. Some of us are from the same country and its easy because we know each other..." What's striking here is his use of "we" in talking about his work; he doesn't talk about himself as an individual but rather as a member of a community, a community which includes both people who aren't literate and people like himself. He goes on to talk about his sense of responsibility, saying that he feels no one cares about people who are not literate or sees their potential.

> I don't like it if they [learners] can do something with their future and someone doesn't care to help them. I really care about them because nobody cares. Someone has to do it. I'm that kind of person that wants to do something for them. I like it.

"It happened to me..."

Another common theme was the idea that because they had had the same struggles when they first came to the U.S., the interns could help others get through difficulties with the language. Dora, for example, said

> When I didn't speak English, I knew how it feels not to understand when people open their mouths so big, saying "Do you understand?" It happened to me. Then I said to myself, you will have to speak English

and to help the other people who are in the condition I was in at that time. The language barrier is so restricting that people think you are out of your mind if you don't speak the language - not everyone, but some people. That's the reason I wanted to do this work with Latinos.

"I don't want them to go through what I went through..."

For Kennya, it wasn't just the general struggles with the language, but it was dealing with discrimination because she was Hispanic that motivated her to want to do this work. When she first came to the U.S. in 1974, she worked in a factory. Since she had studied English for two years at college in Guatemala, she could read and write a little; she tried to teach herself to speak by writing down English words and asking American co-workers how to pronounce them. Through these efforts, she learned enough to be able to take an accounting course and get a job with union benefits that allowed her to go to community college. She describes her experience being placed in a regular English course:

> I had some problems there because the teacher didn't want to give extra attention to the four foreigners and told them that they wouldn't pass the class. We complained to the Dean but they didn't do anything about it...the same problem happened in English II. I did face a lot of discrimination down there. And it really hurts me. I think that was one of the main reasons for deciding to help my people. I don't think that it is fair that if you come from another country, you have to put up with people - the way they treat you like you are a stranger, you don't know how to write. They put you down. They don't realize that you have an education too, that you are a person...they have to see the people the way they are. It's hard, they don't see you. They only think that because you are Spanish, you are automatically no good.

Kennya went on to say that part of her reason for wanting to teach was to help others defend themselves against the kind of discrimination she experienced:

> They don't know their rights and they suffer. I already went through that and I don't want them to go through what I went through. Because when I came to this country, there was a lot of discrimination.

"In my country you didn't need it..."

Another reason the interns wanted to teach L1 literacy related to their understanding of the special challenges (beyond the language barrier and discrimination) people face in the U.S. when they are not literate. It is the differences in the social context that make illiteracy even more of a problem here. Dora, for example, talked about the problems of never having learned to read and write being exacerbated in the U.S:

> In my country not everybody is literate. Most are illiterate... When I came here, [literacy] was more necessary than in my country - you had to sign a check; in my country you didn't need it - poor people don't have to sign checks...

"If I could make this impact..."

Several of the interns had had experiences in their own countries which had inspired them to want to learn more about teaching literacy. For them, the project was a way to follow through on something they had started earlier in their lives and, perhaps, to learn something they could eventually bring back to their countries. Kennya, for example, had taught literacy to about 50 students every night for two years when she was a teenager. "I did that because I always like to be active in the community. I like to help people because you know they need it. It is also a good way to get to know people and to help them with their lives over here." Similarly, Carey told the story of an experience which influenced his later desire to teach:

> When I was much younger and in Haiti and failed the state exam, there was a beach where I used to go very often. Since I wasn't doing anything, there was plenty of time to do what I wanted to do. The beach was five kilometers from where I lived and I liked to walk up the hill to the beach and keep healthy. I met a fisherman there, about my age, named Joba. Joba had a girlfriend who knew how to read and write and he couldn't. I told him not to worry about it; it wasn't a big deal. I told him, "Listen, I have plenty of time, we are going to work on this. I'll teach you at least to sign your name." I kept going to the beach to meet Joba.... and before I left the country Joba could sign his name. If I could make this impact, this progress, a new life for someone - that had a very strong impact on me. That's one of my biggest achievements... Because of me, Joba could write his name. That was very significant for me.

Likewise, Marilyn told the story of teaching a family maid how to read as a child:

> When I was a little girl in Haiti, we had maids... So there was one of the maids who didn't know how to read and write. I taught her how to read and write at that time. She was so grateful and when I came here it had sunk in my mind.

"I can't fix the world, but at least I can do a little bit..."

As with Carey's experience in Haiti, the project gave many of the interns the feeling that they could make a difference. It satisfied their need to do something socially useful while at the same time doing something for themselves: by meeting the learners' needs, they would, in various ways, be meeting their own needs. The project provided a framework for learning how to utilize their own background to

in a constructive way. Dora expressed this as follows, "I thought that I can't fix the world, but at least I can do a little bit. With a little help, I can make other people happy, maybe." Similarly, Carey saw the project as way of using his own education for the community while at the same time doing something personally and intellectually challenging:

> I feel like someone who has an ability should do something; this is my commitment. As far as I'm concerned, I don't really see education like something for the future to make money. I like it and it's a kind of intellectual work that I find myself into.

"It is a concrete way of helping people"

In addition, for interns who came to the project with a more explicit social change perspective, the project offered the opportunity to go beyond the rhetoric of politics. Carey, for example, sees teaching as a way to "put his money where his mouth is" - to take a kind of action which may make a real difference:

> The Haitian community has a lot of problems in terms of education and needs a lot of help. As a Haitian myself, I feel like I should help instead of talking about the problem. What do I do as a Haitian for the community? ...I was interested in politics in Haiti - to be on a radio station to talk very abstractly or tell where I stand [on the issues] I wanted to hit on what's going on. There is a huge amount of people in Haiti who cannot write, who cannot read. If I go back to Haiti, I would like to work with those people. This is the kind of politics in which I would like to be involved. It is a concrete way of helping people.

"When you open a school, you close a prison."

Harry, an intern who had been a teacher in Haiti, saw his teaching more globally in terms of making the world a better place, a goal he has had since his childhood:

> When I was young, my father said to me all the time, you can help better the world when you teach someone. All the time I think about that. After my studies, I thought about helping. I also like the thought that someone said, "When you open a school you close a prison."

While these quotes do not include the voices of all the interns, they paint a picture of the common underlying motivation of the whole group. If there is one theme that can be said to represent all the interns' reasons for participating in the project, it is the theme of commitment to their communities. In every case, it was a deeply-felt desire to contribute to the well-being of people who were in situations similar to their own that moved people to join the project and pushed forward their work.

Chapter Three: The Training Component

The guiding principle for our approach to training was that training processes should be congruent with training content: we wanted our own practice as 'trainers' to reflect and model our philosophy of teaching. Since the approach to literacy education that the training focused on was a participatory one, our goal was to make the training itself participatory. There were three key aspects of this approach that we modeled in the training: 1) the notion of transforming teacher-learner relations; 2) the notion of the negotiated or emergent curriculum; and 3) the notion of inquiry and experience-based learning. These notions constituted the theoretical framework that informed our approach to training. The next section will look at each of these notions and their implications for training.

Teacher-learner relations: Participatory education rests on the assumption that the acquisition of literacy is closely tied to issues of power both outside and inside the classroom. Adults who come to classes for literacy and ESL instruction are very often the people who are at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Their lack of literacy or language proficiency has, in many cases, been the result of social inequities and perpetuates these inequities: they have been excluded from access to education and this, in turn, has kept them from both economic and political participation. Thus, for example, in Haiti, the masses of people were denied education in Creole as a way to keep them powerless; illiteracy served a particular political function, ensuring the dominance of the political and economic elite. In this context, education in Creole means more than just the acquisition of skills: it is a direct challenge to the forces of inequality. As people become more literate, they gain more voice and are able to participate more in shaping the direction of their own lives as well as that of their community. Similarly, adult ESL students, regardless of their occupations and status in their homelands, often find themselves voiceless and marginalized as newcomers in the U.S. They hold the most menial jobs here in the U.S. and, even as their English improves, continue to face obstacles to employment, as well as various forms of discrimination based on their ethnicity.

According to Freire, both the content and the processes of instruction can either reinforce or challenge these social roles for adult learners. The goal of traditional education is to assimilate students into the very structures which have marginalized them, teaching them the skills or competencies required to maintain the status quo; they are prepared to become good workers and good consumers according to the needs of the economy. In participatory education, the goal is to enable learners to assume more control of the direction of their lives and change the conditions which have kept them marginalized. The classroom is a context for understanding and challenging the forces that maintain their powerlessness. Thus, the educational process should both model changes in power relations inside the classroom and rehearse for changes in the learners' roles in the social order outside it. Transforming teacher-learner roles is the starting point for this process.

In traditional education, the teacher is seen as the expert whose task is to transmit his/her knowledge, filling learners with new information or skills. The

learners are the passive recipients of the knowledge that the teacher had determined to be of value. Thus, the process is teacher-centered; the direction is from the teacher to the learners. According to Freire, these relations of dominance and subordination between teacher and student continue to leave learners silenced and powerless: by excluding the learners' reality from the classroom, this approach ensures that the students won't gain the understanding necessary to act on it.

Because the goal of participatory education is ultimately to give learners tools so that they can effect change in their own lives, it is their experience and knowledge (rather than the teachers') which are seen to be the starting point of participatory curriculum development. The teacher's task is to draw out this knowledge, involving learners in the process of determining the goals and content of education. Further, as learners share their individual perspectives through dialogue and critical reflection, new knowledge is created. Thus, learners are not seen as passive consumers, but as active contributors. The teacher's knowledge is also seen as valid, but it serves a different function; it is to be contributed to the collective pool of knowledge rather than to be instilled or transmitted to students. This collaborative aspect is key in laying the groundwork for challenging inequalities outside the classroom: through sharing experiences and arriving at joint strategies for change, learners can prepare to take actions to change conditions which have left them powerless. Applied to teaching literacy, this approach has two aspects: the first, which Freire calls conscientization, is to develop the capacity for critical reflection and action on participants' social reality. The second is more technical or mechanical: it is to develop specific skills related to literacy acquisition. The latter is never isolated from the former: teaching skills and techniques are always contextualized in analysis of learners' experience.

Implications for training: The following principles, derived from participatory education theory were central in informing our approach to training;

**The goal is not just a transfer of skills or techniques: it is to address real problems and take action for change.*

**The starting point is the experience of the participants.*

**Learning must be an active and interactive process.*

**Participants' needs and objectives should be incorporated in the learning process.*

**There are no experts. Everyone teaches, everyone learns; all the participants have something to contribute.*

**The collective knowledge of participants develops through dialogue and sharing.*

**Skills and techniques should not be presented in isolation; they should be related to reflection and analysis.*

The emergent curriculum: Since the content in a participatory approach centers around issues and experiences of learners, the curriculum emerges through interaction with them. It is based not on needs assessment done before instruction begins, but on collaborative investigation of critical issues affecting learners; this investigation is integrated with the instruction itself. Thus, rather than having a pre-specified syllabus, the content of instruction emerges. The particular steps of this process depend to some extent on the context. The chart on the following page represents how the process that Freire developed for literacy work in Brazil was adapted to adult ESL/literacy work in North America. Regardless of the particular formulation, the general sequence is a cyclical process of investigation, identification of themes, dialogue, critical reflection, acquisition of skills, action, and further reflection (evaluation); this movement from back and forth between reflection and action is what Freire calls *praxis*.

Implications for training: The following key participatory processes informed our approach to developing the training curriculum:

Investigation: Needs assessment is based on the real lived experience of participants, not on the analysis of outside 'experts'; participants engage in this investigation as part of the learning process; the curriculum emerges through this interaction with participants.

Dialogue and reflection: Participants share experiences and relate these experiences to an analysis of the broader social context; this process validates everyone's knowledge and becomes the basis for creating new knowledge. As participants situate their own knowledge in the context of others' experience and look for connections or generalizations, they gain a more critical understanding of their own experience.

Problem-posing: Participants address problems or concerns from their day to day reality through a collective sharing of strategies; solutions come not from experts, but from group resources; by exchanging ideas and experiences, participants work together to develop ways of addressing problems.

Action: Participants act to change some aspect of their social context based on strategies developed through dialogue, reflection and problem-posing. They try something new in order to resolve or address a problem they have identified.

Evaluation: They assess the effectiveness of their work, reflecting on what happened, why it happened, what they learned and might do differently. Thus, evaluation itself is participatory, and part of the learning process itself; it informs subsequent curricuum development.

Overview of the Participatory Curriculum Development Process

Listening to find important concerns from students' lives

Start with students: Find out what is happening in their lives, what is important to them, what they need English or literacy FOR. This can best be done by structuring catalyst activities that will elicit concerns, not just by asking "What do you want to do?"

Dialogue, language and literacy work including social analysis and skills development

*Focus lesson on CONTENT that is relevant to their lives: Use the issue or concern you have identified through listening as the framework for the lesson. Don't teach skills in isolation, without reference to meaningful content. Teach skills in the context of the issue.

*Present the issue in a concrete way: Use a picture, story, or open-ended exercise (eg. theater) that students can react to in discussing the issue.

*Ask for their ideas, experiences and interpretations of the picture, story or exercise. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. The point of dialogue is to develop thinking and awareness.

*Move the dialogue from individual experience to social analysis: Ask for experiences indirectly (not personal questions) and then compare experiences; try to look for the roots of problems; make connections between individual experience and the broader social context. Depersonalize the dialogue.

*Introduce new material related to the topic:

-Relate their words to print (write key words/stories).
-Bring in readings related to the topic.
-Bring in grammar or competencies related to the topic.
-Do writing exercises about the issue.

*Relate grammar, vocabulary, language work to the theme: Provide structure for exercises, but let the students provide content, ideas, information.

Action to make changes in students' lives relating to the issue

Figure out strategies and possibilities for doing something about the problem or concern; explore alternative ways of addressing the problem.

Evaluation to see what students liked/disliked; what went well; what could be done better next time and what's next

Inquiry-based learning: Clearly, the notions of learning through observation, investigation, reflection and dialogue are integral to the process described above. If information is not transmitted, participants must become actively involved in constructing it. In participatory education, this process is started through the carefully structured elicitation of participants' experience; participants learn how to gather information, name or identify issues, and analyze them.

Implications for training: Applying the principles and processes of participatory education to teacher training is very much congruent with state-of-the-art teacher education theory, which emphasizes practitioner research and inquiry-based staff development (Lytle 1992) well as experiential and problem-oriented learning (Nunan 1990). A central notion of current teacher education theory is that effective teaching is not achieved through the implementation of a teaching technology, but rather through critical responsiveness to learners. This notion is relevant not just for teaching students, but for teaching teachers as well. Training in specific classroom methods, behaviors or techniques in itself doesn't prepare teachers for the complex reality of the classroom; it is the ability to discover needs and decide how to act on them that makes good teachers. Thus, what teachers need is not a prescription for what to do and how to do it, but rather investigative skills and a conceptual framework for decision-making (Gebhardt et al 1990). This framework can best be developed through observation, practice and reflection in the context of work, dialogue and analysis with a community of experienced teachers and knowledgeable peers. We applied this theory to our own work through the following **contexts** and **processes**.

Contexts for inquiry:

classroom-based mentoring: observing and working alongside experienced Master Teachers with one-on-one dialogue and feedback about practice

site-based teacher sharing meetings: sharing plans, issues, and concerns with peers at the site

monthly university-based workshops: developing a conceptual framework and new techniques, as well as sharing experiences with participants from other programs in the project, staff and invited outside facilitators

Processes for inquiry:

modeling: learning new instructional techniques and processes by actively participating in trying them out and/or observing someone else try them

teacher-sharing: dialogue about plans, issues and concerns in which peers share ideas and approaches, reflecting together on practice

problem-posing: a specific structured process for addressing problems of classroom practice in which peers share experiences, analyze causes of problems and collaboratively develop strategies for addressing them.

Planning the monthly training workshops

In accordance with this theoretical framework, we developed our trainings through interaction with interns, rather than pre-determining a training curriculum which specified skills, competencies or topics. Of course we started with an overall sense of the direction, content and processes for the training which included two main components: 1) developing a conceptual framework for participatory literacy/ESL instruction (including a critique of traditional mechanical approaches to literacy instruction and exploration of teacher-learner roles) and 2) going through the steps of participatory curriculum development as outlined on page 46. During the first year of training (Feb. 1991 to Jan 1992), the sequence of topics corresponded closely to these steps, although the order of presentation, types of activities and particular content were determined by listening to what interns needed at various points. These needs were then addressed by presentations of information, participatory activities and dialogue. Each session focused on a general concept or topic and modeled one or more specific tools for use with learners. All along the way we tried to incorporate the interns' concerns and experiences, invited their active participation, and emphasized dialogue and inquiry rather than telling them what to do.

During the second year of the project, the topics were selected more directly by the interns, according to needs they identified. The sequence was shaped as well by external factors which had little to do with the internal logic of the training sequence - factors such as when outside presenters were available, when new interns joined the project, and when we had to prepare for conference presentations. Fleshing out the content of each session took place during weekly staff meetings. Although the steps of the planning process were not explicit or conscious at the time, in retrospect, we have identified these steps as follows:

1. Identifying needs/topics: Possible topics were determined in a number of ways. At the beginning, we identified topics based on our own objectives for setting the tone of the training. Right from the start, though, we tried to get interns' input about their own needs and goals by asking them why they were participating in the project and what they hoped to get out of it; in the first session, for example, many interns asked for information about literacy campaigns in third world countries because they were interested in using what they learned in the training if and when they returned to their own countries. As we proceeded, we also listened for specific issues, requests or problem areas that came up during the course of workshops and follow-up evaluations; in some cases, the interns themselves identified problems (for example, they wanted to focus on multi-level classes and transitional ESL classes); in others, we identified issues through our own observations of their practice (for example, Master Teachers noted that interns needed to refine their approach to responding to incorrect answers); at times, issues for future sessions arose during the course of the workshops themselves (for example, some initial tensions between the language groups in the project became content for the subsequent session on identifying participants' issues).

One of the challenges in designing the training was to balance what the interns said they wanted/needed and our perceptions of what would benefit them. This, of course, is precisely the challenge that teachers face in working with adult learners; very often learners have internalized the traditional model of education which has been least productive for them. Similarly, when interns came into the sessions at the beginning, they expected and asked for training in techniques; they wanted to be told exactly what to do in class and they especially liked the idea of outside experts coming in to do this. We had to figure out how, on the one hand, to address this need, and on the other, to be true to our own philosophy/approach of literacy education. We did this by always trying to include concrete classroom related acitivities, but having them incorporate learners' realities. The interns' changing notions of what was important and how they wanted the sessions to be structured was one of the indicators of the development of their conceptions of education (which we will come back to in the evaluation of the project): by the end of the project, they valued their freedom and capacity to decide for themselves what to do, and the sharing of practice as a primary learning resource.

Thus, overall, our own process for determining training topics modeled the participatory approach in that the training curriculum was emergent and negotiated. We ourselves practiced **active listening** and **structured elicitation** (the first steps of the participatory curriculum development process) to identify interns' needs.

2. Selecting a topic: Very often two or three possibile topics would emerge from the needs discussion. The process of selecting a topic obviously included some discussion of which topic seemed necessary, timely, and practical (in terms of how much time we would need to prepare it as well as the external factors mentioned above). The decision depended in part on what we hoped to get out of the session, how it related to other sessions and how it related to what was happening at the sites. For example, in the Fall of 1991, a new group of interns was about to start at one site, but some of the old interns were just beginning to work independently at the others. Thus, while our original idea was to present an overview of the participatory curriculum development process as a kind of review for one group and an introduction for the other, we decided that shifting the focus to emphasize the transition between theory and practice would better meet the needs of the newly independent interns; thus, we decided to introduce the theory by eliciting from the experienced interns their understanding and then go on to the reality of classroom life - how they were experiencing the transition from theory to practice.

3. Determining the objectives and rationale for the session: Once the topic had been selected, we discussed objectives in greater detail. The bottom line questions were, "Why is this workshop important? What are the root causes of this issue? What do we hope that interns will come away with in this session?" The answers to these questions then helped us determine activities. A session on the relationship between literacy and politics serves to illustrates how these questions shaped our planning. In December, 1991 most of us (both staff and interns) had gone to an international conference in celebration of Paulo Freire's 70th birthday; while at the conference we identified a tension around the role of politics in literacy work. Some

interns felt uncomfortable about seeing their work as political and unclear about the relationship between politics and literacy. As we discussed why they felt this way in our planning session, it became clear that many of the interns see 'politics' as meaning explicit discussion of elections, war, political parties, etc. Further, interns themselves come from countries where political discussions may have severe consequences, and are afraid of heated debates for very real reasons. In addition, some come from cultures where they are not used to overtly disagreeing with or challenging someone else's ideas. Finally, interns may be uncomfortable because of experiences in which someone has dogmatically tried to impose an ideology. Once we had discussed the reasons for the tension (its root causes), we realized that our first task had to be uncovering what people meant by 'politics' and what they feared about bringing politics into the classroom. A second objective was to create a context for debate; as Ana said, the most important message is that "even though we have so much commonality as a group, it's fine for us to disagree, to have different points of view. We can listen to each other and learn from each other. We can have different opinions and still be a group." From this discussion, we developed guiding questions around which to plan activities: What are our resistances and reasons for feeling uncomfortable about the idea of connecting literacy and politics? What do we mean by politics? What do we understand it to be? How do these understandings relate to what we do in class?

4. Brainstorming activities: After developing some objectives, we brainstormed activities which would allow us to get at the topic interactively and to model the process or tool being presented. If we weren't sure how to begin planning, we sometimes started just by talking about our own practice as teachers in dealing with the topic at hand; for example, in planning the session on teaching beginning or transitional ESL, each Master Teacher described what he or she does in initial classes. We then tried to generalize and identify aspects of the topic that we should explore in the workshop. Several principles guided our design of activities: we tried to start each workshop with an activity to elicit participants' experiences, ideas or concerns about the topic; thus, for example, in the politics and literacy workshop, we started by asking interns to design short skits about their worst nightmares of bringing politics into the classroom. In introducing new tools or processes, we tried to *show* rather than *tell* interns through a hands-on activity; thus, for example, in teaching about using pictures to elicit student themes, we used the pictures to elicit themes from the interns. We often tried to link a workshop to the previous one, following up on tools or concepts that had been introduced earlier; in one case, for example, an outside presenter introduced the idea of a problem-posing tree for use with learners and we used the same tool the following month to address interns' concerns. We also tried to connect activities to interns' experiences as much as possible; thus, in introducing codes, for example, we chose examples that reflected issues that interns were dealing with in their own lives (eg., being well-educated but underemployed). Finally, we tried to create a variety of participant structures or groupings so that interns could work in pairs, in small groups with people from their own sites, in small groups with people from other sites, and in a large group.

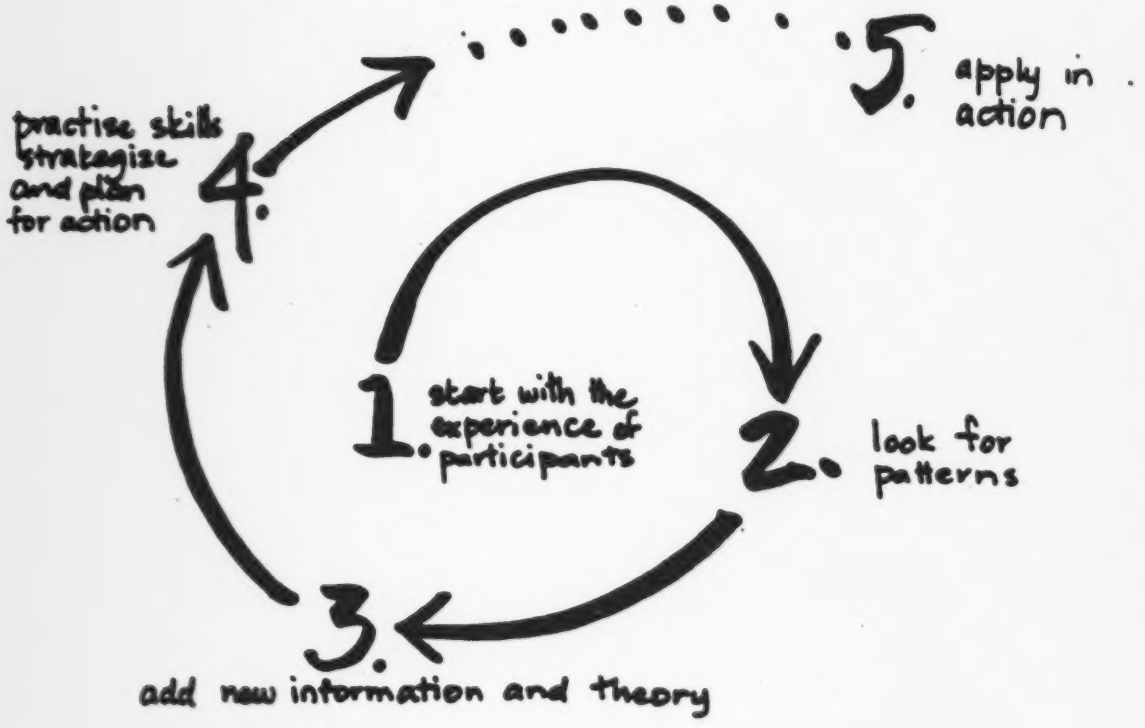
5. Further research/homework: Once the group had fleshed out a general set of objectives and possible format for a session, we did some further research to find activities or information that might supplement our preliminary ideas. We looked at a variety of participatory education/literacy/ESL guides (see Resources), at ESL teacher training handbooks, at ESL texts and at resources we had developed ourselves in other projects (eg., the Family Literacy Project). From these, we got ideas for activities, as well as articles and examples to use as handouts. Teachers in many cases thought about and brought in examples of how they addressed a particular issue in their own practice. In addition, we consulted colleagues about how they designed workshops on specfied topics. The 'homework,' for example, in the session on evaluation, included each teacher bringing in one example of an evaluation tool or process from his/her site, consulting with Loren McGrail, who has conducted numerous workshops on evaluation, on how she set up her sessions, reviewing a wide range of articles and evaluation tools, and designing a comprehensive packet of materials to exemplify different approaches.

6. Developing a workshop plan: The next step was to pull together the ideas and information into a sequence of activities. Although we did not consciously follow a pre-determined format or schema for the workshops, they generally proceeded according to a similar pattern. We started with a warm-up activity to elicit participants' experiences/perspectives on a topic; we then reflected on the individual experiences as a group; then there was a more formal presentation of new information about the topic; we broke into groups and tried to apply the new information in a participatory activity which modeled a classroom activity; then we came back together for more reflection and ended with evaluation. This pattern is similar to the spiral model (next page) presented in Educating for a Change (Arnold et al 1991), a Canadian book about planning popular education workshops (although we didn't know about this model until after we were well into our own process).

7. Logistics: The final step in the planning process was working out logistical details -who would facilitate which parts of the training, how long each segment would take, and who would be responsible for bringing materials, props, etc. We tried to divide the responsibilities so that each staff member would have some role in facilitating or presenting, depending on what he/she felt comfortable doing. In addition, as the project developed, we increasingly invited interns to take some role in the training. Timing was a persistent and inevitable problem: we always planned too much and what we planned always took longer than expected. Thus, one of our final jobs was to think realistically about how long each part might take and what to do in case something took longer than expected.

The following diagram, from Educating for a Change (Arnold et al 1991: 38), illustrates the general pattern that our workshops followed. Our model also included evaluation of the workshop itself.

The spiral model


5. apply in action
practise skills strategize and plan for action
4.
1. start with the experience of participants
2. look for patterns
3.
add new information and theory

The outline on the following page presents the sequence of university-based workshops. As it indicates, the workshops first proceeded through the steps of the participatory curriculum development process (as presented on p. 46) and then went on to address issues that arose from participants' own work, using participatory tools to work through them. A detailed description of each workshop, including its objectives, the sequence of activities and evaluative reflections is presented in Appendix A).

The workshop sequence

Conceptual Framework (Feb. 1991)

What is a participatory approach?
Tool: Using photographs to explore learning experiences

Listening to find important concerns in learners' lives

What's an issue or a theme? How do you find issues? (March 1991)
Tools: Ways in to student issues/themes (photos, grammar exercises, conscious listening)

Exploring themes through dialogue, language and literacy work

What do you do with an issue once you find it? (April 1991)
Tool: Language experience approach

How do you use an issue to extend analysis and literacy? What is problem-posing and what forms can it take?
Tool: Making and using codes (May 1991)
Tool: Theater in literacy education (June 1991)
Tool: Problem-posing trees (Sept. 1991)
Tool: Photonovellas (Sept. 1991)

Action to address problems and make changes in practice

How do you make the transition from theory to practice in teaching literacy/ESL? (Oct. 1991)
Tool: Problem-posing trees (using problem-posing to address classroom concerns)

Conference presentation about our practice (Preparation - Nov. 1991; Presentation - Dec. 1991)

Evaluation to determine where we've been and where we want to go (Jan. 1992)

Issues of practice for further exploration (identified through evaluation):

What is the relationship between politics and literacy? How does politics relate to literacy work? (Feb. 1992)

How do we work with students just making the transition into beginning ESL? (March 1992)

How can we use games to teach literacy and ESL? (April 1992)

What can we learn from literacy campaigns in third world countries? (May 1992)

How can we assess student progress? (June 1992)

How can we assess our own learning? (July 1992)

Training Issues

As the reflections in Appendix A suggest, there was a cyclical recurrence of training issues that emerged in the workshops: interns went back and forth around certain themes throughout the life of the project. Some of these issues pertain to the general approach to teaching adult literacy, some to the workshops themselves, and some to the relationship between training and teaching (site-based practice). In many cases, the particular demands in terms of training content were shaped by structural and contextual factors.[1] This section will summarize key training issues and go on to explain our processes for addressing them, ending with guidelines or lessons for training which emerged out of our cumulative in experience struggling with them. For each of the general issues listed below, there were different perspectives among interns and changes in perspective within any given intern through the course of the project; as such, these issues represent varying concerns of subgroups at various times.

1. *"What method are we supposed to use?"*

Many interns started out wanting us to provide recipes for practice and to tell them what to do in the classroom: they were looking for a method or techniques that could be applied directly from the trainings to teaching. In part, this may have been due to the fact that the project was called a "training" project - the name itself suggested that they would be taught skills. Yet our approach (both for teaching adults and for training teachers) contradicted this desire for techniques; as such, the initial focus on exploring a conceptual framework and a process for generating context-specific curricula seemed frustrating or confusing for some. While they expected us to tell them the "right way" to teach, we wanted them to experiment, discover, reflect, adapt and figure out for themselves what would make sense in their own contexts. The dilemma for us as trainers was that, on the one hand, we wanted to be responsive to interns' agendas but, on the other, we wanted to encourage a stance of inquiry and to model a dialogical approach in our training. We had to find a balance between establishing a guiding conceptual framework and providing practical, hands-on content that they could use immediately.

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[1] As mentioned in the chapter on Project Structure, there was variation in terms of whether interns worked in classrooms with Master Teachers, whether they had supervised preparation time, and how many hours per week they were in classes. For example, at the HMSC, interns would each teach eight hours plus attend a two hour meeting each week (either a teacher-sharing meeting or a workshop). Each intern was responsible for lesson planning but was not paid for preparation time. In some cases, they were not in a position to see another more experienced teacher teach. Thus, their training contexts included weekly teacher-sharing sessions, the occasional visits of the curriculum development specialist, the monthly workshops and special seminars on Haitian Creole literacy and linguistics from time to time. At the JMCS, there was a greater emphasis on mentoring, with each intern working side-by-side with the Master Teacher until he/she felt comfortable working independently; in addition, there was more collaborative planning at weekly meetings, but less structured teacher-sharing. At Harborside, the planning was done before classes, but there were fewer meetings of the entire group of interns. Thus, what the interns expected out of the workshops depended to some extent on what was happening at their sites. These constraints of time and structure framed their demands for the content of the training.

2. *"Where's the curriculum?"*

Similarly, some of the interns felt strongly that the project or the sites should give them a curriculum or a list of what is to be covered at each level. At the same time, their accounts of successful lessons often involved not following a pre-planned sequence of activities but responding to student issues that arose spontaneously or as a result of a trigger activity. Thus, there was a tension between the legitimate need of new teachers for a guiding curriculum and the notion that the most effective curricula are those that integrate ongoing student issues and emerge through negotiation with students. This tension was mirrored in our process of developing a training curriculum: on the one hand, we wanted, as trainers, to be proactive in designing a long-term plan for workshops which would cover what we considered to be the essential sequence of topics; yet we also wanted to take into account the needs and realities emerging from the ongoing workshops and participants' practice. Thus, like teachers, we had to try to balance the need for a carefully sequenced series of topics that had some coherence with the need to be responsive to needs that arose during the course of the workshops and teaching. Embedded in this general tension about the sequence of sessions was a similar tension between planning and spontaneity within any given session: how do we decide when to stick to our agenda or go with the flow?

3. *"What do the experts say?"*

A related issue was the sense, among some interns, that outside experts had the 'answers' - that there was some external body of knowledge about how to teach literacy the 'right' way. At times interns seemed to hold the view that the information of an outside expert was more valuable than their own knowledge or the knowledge constructed by the group through sharing, dialogue and reflection. Yet, very often the workshops that the interns responded most positively to and were most engaged in were the ones in which they shared their own experiences and practice with each other. Thus, one of our tasks became the demystification of the 'everybody else knows better' view.

4. *"Why are we talking about unemployment? This is not a jobs agency."*

Since many of the interns had experienced only a very traditional, teacher-centered and skills-based approach in their own education and had learned to read using a decontextualized, bottom-up phonics method, there was some resistance to a dialogical and meaning-centered approach, particularly for teaching initial literacy. It was a struggle for some interns to see dialogue about student concerns (and particularly concerns that had political implications) as relevant to literacy education or as a possible context within which to teach skills. A central issue about the content of the training, thus, was whether we should be following a mechanical (skills-based, teacher-centered) approach, a participatory (meaning-based, learner-centered) approach to literacy, or somehow integrate the two approaches.

5. *"That doesn't apply to my students."*

The diversity among and within sites challenged us to ensure that we were addressing the particular needs of everyone while not excluding anyone. Since participants were teaching in three different languages, with some ESL and some native language literacy, and with students at a variety of levels both within and between classes, the challenge was great. What might work in an ESL context (focusing on grammar instruction or conversation) might seem irrelevant for teachers of L1 literacy. In addition, interns embraced various aspects of the training content and approach to literacy at different rates. Thus, at times, particular interns felt that workshops were not geared toward their situations. In this sense, our group mirrored the situation of many ESL classes in its multiplicity of levels and needs. As trainers, we faced the same question that teachers face: how could we find common areas for training when the linguistic situations (and consequent teaching problems at each site) are so different? How could we find material that was relevant across a range of situations and provide contexts for linking the general information/process/activity to particular needs?

6. *"You think you know everything."*

Because of the diversity within the group, differences in style and personality, and the dynamic of peer learning, there were inevitable tensions among participants both within and across sites; they included tensions between nationality groups (for example, when a Haitian intern said that Hispanics don't have the same motivation to learn English as Haitians), between interns with different styles and perceptions of power relations working in the same classroom, and between different teaching philosophies (concerning how to develop discipline among learners), etc. The challenge here was to draw out and validate the diversity of experiences and facilitate a process of respectful listening. Where tensions arose, we had to help people work through the tensions without stepping in as the 'authority' figures to resolve them.

7. *"But what about my teaching problems?"*

At times, interns might enjoy a workshop or seem particularly involved, but once back at the site, there would be little follow-up or application from the training. Interns connected workshop ideas to practice unevenly. Further, despite our efforts to include explicit practice-oriented activities in the trainings, interns sometimes felt that we should focus more on teaching problems. Our model did not include enough time for structured, systematic follow-up on the workshops at the sites.

8. *"I didn't have time to read that."*

At almost every workshop, we handed out short readings including background information, examples of lessons, or teachers' accounts of practice utilizing the tools we were focusing on in the session. Frequently, however, interns did not read the

handouts; when we asked for feedback about them, they would say that they didn't have time or that they don't like to read. A number of factors might have contributed to this reluctance: first, of course, interns were already pressed to find time to do preparations, attend meetings, etc.; second, the readings were in English so interns may have had trouble from a linguistic point of view; third, they may not have been accustomed to doing a lot of reading and/or to learning by reading. In retrospect, the staff felt that we should have focused a specific workshop on second language reading (beyond a beginning level), utilizing our own readings and interns' reading processes as a focus of reflection.

Addressing training issues

There were several contexts for addressing training issues: in the training workshops themselves, in site-based teacher-sharing meetings, in the literacy classrooms (through mentoring with the curriculum specialist and Master Teachers and peer-observation/teaching with other interns). Examples of addressing training issues in each of these contexts are described below. Our basic approach in each case was to handle the issue in a way that was congruent with the participatory philosophy of adult education. Thus, we tried to respond not by 'fixing' the problem, but by posing it back to participants and making the issues themselves the content around which tools, dialogue and reflection were developed, negotiating differences between interns' expectations and the project agenda all along the way.

Workshops

Selection of topics: We tried to reconcile interns' agendas with our own by involving them in the selection of topics for workshops (eg., they chose the sessions on games, transitional ESL classes, and literacy campaigns). At times, we devoted whole sessions to the process of working through particular training issues (eg. politics and literacy). We tried to respond to their desire for techniques by including at least one part in each workshop that focused on specific classroom applications.

Using training issues as content in the modeling of tools: We incorporated training issues as the subject matter when we demonstrated the use of *codes:* (eg., the model code in Session 4). We used *problem-posing trees* to address the general issue of the transition from theory to practice and to work through specific problems of practice.

Meta-talk about training issues: Very often we would make a training issue or tension explicit, explaining to interns how and why we designed an exercise to address this issue. We tried to make our own process of identifying issues and incorporating them into training as visible as possible.

Peer-learning and problem-posing: We structured ways for interns to draw on each other's resources in addressing problems (rather than presenting solutions ourselves); for example, the issue of corrections (Session 3) was addressed by presenting it back to interns for dialogue, eliciting alternatives from the group. The issue of expertise was addressed by creating multiple opportunities for interns to compare the knowledge they constructed themselves with that provided by experts.

Teacher-sharing meetings

Issues relating to the transition from training to practice, tensions among interns, and particular teaching problems were addressed through teacher-sharing meetings. These meetings were generally a time for interns to reflect on what they did during the past week, to plan for the subsequent week, to evaluate training workshops, and to figure out whether/how training content could be adapted for use at the site. They were a place for all the participants (Master Teacher and interns alike) to learn from each other, rather than for Master Teachers to tell interns what to do. As such, teacher-sharing is a non-directive process for supporting interns' development. The particular content and format of these meetings varied from site to site and within a given site. The following skeletal format represents how many of the meetings at the HMSC developed; this site is used to illustrate the process because it is the one I am most familiar with (since I participated in those meetings).

1. *Report back:* Participants quickly go around the table reporting what they did in class during the past week, noting particular problem-areas or successes.

2. *Identify an issue/theme/topic for exploration:* The facilitator tries to identify some significant teaching issue, concern or theme. It can either be a common issue (that recurs in several interns' accounts of their practice), a particularly pressing concern of one person, or an example which others might learn from. The facilitator either reflects back what he/she sees as a theme for further exploration or asks participants what they would like to focus on. Alternatively, the facilitator can bring in an issue that he/she has noted by observing interns' practice. In any case, the issue is re-presented as a question/description, rather than as a criticism /solution.

3. *Reflect on the issue through structured dialogue:* The group collectively reflects on the theme, addressing questions like: What was the problem here? Why did this happen? What are the roots of this problem? Have you experienced anything like this? What did you/might you do in a situation like this? Why? In discussing positive examples of practice, we explore questions like: What were the steps in the process? Why was it so successful? How would you change it next time?

4. *Propose alternatives/strategies:* Each participant (including the facilitator/Master Teacher) suggests how he/she might follow up on the issue with learners. At this point the facilitator can present new information, ideas, activities or theory to deepen the discussion. After a range of possibilities are generated, we discuss possible plans of action each intern feels comfortable with, giving the choice back to interns with questions like: What might you like to try from this discussion? What ideas did you get from this discussion for your class? No one is told that they should do anything; rather, each intern takes what they want from the discussion.

Teacher-sharing has several benefits. It is a non-judgmental way of dealing with unevenness or weaknesses in interns' practice; for example, when one Master Teacher felt uncomfortable about the way an intern was handling corrections, rather than telling her she was doing it incorrectly, the issue was brought back to the group as a 'neutral' topic. The group generated a range of strategies; everyone was invited to look over the alternatives, choose a new strategy to try and evaluate its effectiveness (and eventually the topic was brought to the monthly workshops for further exploration). This process depersonalizes the issue, allowing for mutual learning and practice-oriented inquiry. Likewise, when the Curriculum Specialist observed a particularly effective lesson, she invited the intern to share it at the meeting so others could learn from it. Teacher sharing is also particularly effective in validating practioner knowledge: as interns share their practice among knowledgeable peers, they gain ideas but also begin to reflect more critically on their own practice. In addition, if careful minutes are taken of teacher-sharing meetings, this documentation can become a tool for the evaluation of training and teaching. Two examples of minutes from teacher sharing meetings are included inAppendix B to give a flavor of the process. Both are from the HMSC: the first is of a typical meeting where a range of issues emerged; the second is a follow-up to a prior session in which an intern had tried to introduce dialogue journals but students had been confused about the directions and used journals as a place to write vocabulary. In this case, the teacher-sharing takes the form of a training session in which dialogue journal writing is modeled and discussed.

Probably the biggest problem with teacher-sharing is that there never seems to be enough time for everything. There is a a tension between having to focus on concrete planning (developing lessons and activities for the upcoming week) and the more open-ended, issue-oriented dialogue described above. In addition, in our case, we did not realize until late in the project how important this on-site follow-up is for the implentation of ideas from the Saturday sessions. The most effective linking of the training workshops to the work at the sites seemed to occur when one intern had missed the workshop and others had to report back about it. These site-based discussions of the trainings helped the interns explore issues and ideas more openly, take ownerhship of the ideas, and concretely evaluate if/how to apply them in their own work.

The most difficult area to deal with in teacher-sharing meetings seemed to be tensions between interns. In some cases, interns had strongly diverging ideas about issues like discipline or the teachers' role; in others, one intern might feel threatened by another, worried that he/she might dominate or impose a particular way of doing things. At varying times, the interpersonal tensions were discussed in meetings, addressed outside of meetings (one-on-one between Master Teacher and interns) or handled by changing the pairings of interns in classes. Although this seemed to be a thorny problem along the way, in each case, the difficulties were resolved; in one case, an intern said the the single most important thing she had learned from the project was how to work with other people, to listen to them and to work out difficulties.

In-class mentoring and peer observation

Although the in-class mentoring component of our training is perhaps its least well-documented aspect (because there was no third party who could take minutes during the course of a given session), it is by no means the least important. The mentoring also varied from site to site; in some cases, it was quite systematic and followed the plan in the original proposal while in others, it was more sporadic. When the Master Teacher acted as mentor, he or she generally went from primary responsibility to shared responsibility to secondary responsibility for a given class. The Curriculum Specialist also acted as a mentor at two of the sites. There were three basic participant structures that she used for mentoring: at times, she actually took over the class for a period of time to teach a lesson, demonstrate the use of a tool, etc.; at times, she observed and provided feedback as requested later; in some cases, she took turns with the intern, observing some of the time and jumping in to demonstrate or facilitate at a particular point.

Very often, the Master Teacher or Curriculum Specialist would also assist with materials development, typing up a language experience story, for example, and suggesting how it might be used in a subsequent lessons. The guiding principle was always that the intern determined how the mentor would interact, depending on what he/she was comfortable with; the mentor provided feedback or made suggestions if requested to do so. In addition, the mentor might identify an issue or positive practice to share with the others at the weekly meeting, or a more general issue to be dealt with at a Saturday session.

In addition to more formal mentoring, there was a great deal of informal peer-observation among interns. At various points, we tried to structure this more formally, but it turned out to be logistically difficult. Again, although this was not documented systematically, our sense was that interns learned a great deal from each other. Marilyn and Champtale, for example, at the HMSC, exchanged ideas and lesson plans on a regular basis. Champtale would always attend Marilyn's class from 4 to 6 pm before teaching her own from 6 to 8 pm. Carey visited Harry's class several times. At the JMCS and HCC, interns spent a considerable amount of time co-teaching the same group of students. In the following quote, one of the interns talks about the power of this peer observation for himself:

> I listened a lot to the other teachers. I tried what they try in class. I watched them to see their strengths and weaknesses. That way I could get the best part of what they are teaching and try it. It was also an opportunity for me to watch [Eugenie] ... The level at which you are teaching over there is different. My level is a bit higher. I returned and told Jean-Marc to try this out in his class and tell me how it worked. He said, "Hey, it works!' Now I know that if I have to teach a level lower than mine, I know exactly where to start. I did the same thing for Harry's class. Last summer, he was teaching Creole and very often I sat down in his class to watch what he was doing. That gives me a sense - if you ever have this problem, this is an approach that may suit it.

Eugenie summed up the benefits of this process when she said:

> Preparing lesson plans together was a great learning tool. I was impressed by the creativity of the interns and the way they talked things through. I think that the peer-teaching was a very effective training component because of the sense of equality among interns. *They were all the 'experts' and thus felt comfortable challenging each other."*

Site-based workshops

One final way of dealing with specific training issues was through site-based Saturday workshops. This format was used primarily at the HMSC to develope participants' knowledge base about Haitian Creole linguistics and literacy. At several points during the course of the project, interns requested these workshops and outside Creole experts were invited in to conduct them.

Guidelines for training

The following guidelines reflect what we learned through our practice, including both DO's and DON'T's - what was effective and what was problematic.

Involve interns in the selection of topics. Link presentations to work at the sites, using examples from interns' practice or from the shared experience of the group.

Link content to participants' life experience as immigrants and learners, as well as their experience as teachers.

Use the content of workshops themselves (and issues that emerge from training) to illustrate ways of developing curriculum.

Keep it simple; don't overwhelm interns with too much new material or information. Don't plan too many activities. Allow time for the unexpected.

Let go of the plan mid-stream if it isn't working; talk about why you're making this decision. Don't get stuck on the agenda.

Bring in something external for people to react to: videos, outside speakers, skits; allow time for participants to evaluate them critically.

Don't count on participants doing their homework (eg. coming prepared with examples of their practice, doing readings or trying suggested activities in their classes).

Combine practical, hands-on techniques and activities with theory and reflection; combine the presentation of new information with interaction around participants' experiences and ideas. *Elicit* rather than just *transmitting*.

Make the workshop active and experiential, modeling activities, not just describing them. Be concrete. Don't present abstract concepts in isolation: give examples that you can see, touch, feel, interact with. Show, don't tell.

Structure ways for interns to learn from each other and validate the knowledge they've gained from practice; don't leave all the presenting in the hands of a few 'trainers.' Allow plenty of time for discussion and sharing between sites.

Invite interns to explore various aspects of a debate in the field (eg., whether to correct while doing language experience stories) rather than presenting only the 'correct' side of the debate; present the debate itself.

Make it clear that you're presenting options and alternatives, not prescriptions - that you're sharing, not telling people what to do; ask interns if there's anything they might like to try. Invite them to experiment and investigate.

Resist the temptation to be problem-solvers. Give interns tools for trying to resolve their own problems rather than trying to solve them for interns.

Allow time for participants to figure things out for themselves; don't jump in to provide answers if they're struggling.

Include space for people to talk about their fears and failures; don't focus just on successes and models of 'good' practice. Reinforce the notion of learning through mistakes - that everyone has times when things flop.

Talk about the process and reflect on what's happening as you go; if something turns out to be inappropriate, discuss why and the parallels with what happens in class.

Explain things in clear, understandable language; avoid jargon or academic terms.

Gradually increase interns' roles and responsibilities in conducting the workshops.

Situate what you're doing in a broader context; talk about what others are doing in various parts of the country or the world so that interns get a sense of how their work fits into a bigger picture.

Build in time for evaluation both at the workshop and at the sites.

Include action planning as a regular part of workshops; follow-up on workshop ideas at the sites with discussion of ideas/activities and planning for implementation.

Chapter Four: The Teaching Component

Since the language of instruction, learner populations, and community contexts differed from site to site in the BCLTP, there was considerable variability in the content, development and outcomes of the classes for adult learners in the project. At the same time, however, the basic approach to curriculum development and tools for literacy instruction were similar at each of the sites. In this section, we will look at the particular characteristics of the instructional components at each of the sites, the common approaches and tools utilized throughout the project, and the teaching issues that arose for the sites both individually and jointly. Since native language literacy instruction is a more recent and less charted territory than ESL literacy, more attention will be paid to the development of the Spanish and Haitian Creole literacy components.

How were students recruited?

Recruitment varied from site to site, depending on the language of instruction and relation of the site to the community of the learners. Since interns worked in ongoing ESL classes at the Jackson-Mann Community Center, recruitment was not an issue: students were assigned to classes off of the already-long waiting list and interns were placed in these classes; when interns were ready to teach independently, additional classes were formed from people on the waiting lists. There was no special recruitment for the classes supported through the project.

Similarly, at the Haitian Multi-Service Center, when this project started, there was a long waiting list for ESL classes which included many people (an estimated 20-30%) who were not literate in their first language. Since the HMSC offers a variety of services (including health, legal, job training, etc.) and has a primarily Haitian staff, many Haitians with little schooling come there who might not otherwise have gone to a mixed language ESL site (because of being intimidated either by the 'school' context or by the fact that the sites are not bilingual). Further, since the HMSC is the only agency in Boston which exclusively serves Haitians, it is a central contact point for newly arrived Haitians in the Boston area. While their original reason for going to the HMSC may not be educational, these students often sign up for classes once they see it is a 'safe' bilingual setting. Prior to this project, low literate students were sometimes placed in Creole literacy classes taught by volunteers (although these classes were small and somewhat unstable in continuity), sometimes placed in beginning ESL classes (where they often had difficulty), and sometimes left on the waiting list since there was no suitable placement. Thus, there was a significant population of students already in contact with the Center who were prime candidates for Creole literacy classes.

The students themselves, however, generally expressed interest in *ESL* classes, and did not necessarily see the value of learning to read and write in Creole.

To some extent, this was the same issue that inevitably faces any native language literacy program in a North American context: students question the usefulness of learning to read and write in their first language when they are in an English-speaking country. However, the situation at the HMSC was compounded by the fact that, unlike Spanish, Haitian Creole was, until recently, not the language of initial literacy acquisition for anyone; further, because, historically, French was imposed as the official language and the language of education (in order to ensure the domination of the elite and exclude the masses from political and economic power), it has traditionally been stigmatized as the language of the 'ignorant' and seen as an impediment to improving one's life. For these reasons, the issue at the HMSC was not so much one of finding students, as one of convincing them that they could benefit from Creole literacy classes. The entire center went through a process of dialogue and discussion about the value of Creole which began before the project started and continued throughout as an integral part of instruction.

The native language literacy classes at the Harborside school took place in a context quite different from those at the other sites: it was the only site where an entirely new component was set up through the project. Unlike the HMSC and the JMCS, there was not an already existing pool of potential students (with low Spanish literacy and minimal schooling) on the waiting list. Although many students who were not literate in Spanish had been identified through the amnesty ESL classes (students who came to the Center for the first time because they needed the required number of hours of ESL instruction to become documented), at that time there had been no financial or structural support for Spanish literacy. Bryon developed several strategies for outreach and recruitment for the Spanish literacy component, including the following:

*invitations to former amnesty students (calls and personal notes)
*announcements at churches
*house parties (visits to former and current students' homes where potential students have been invited)
*posters, flyers, announcements in local newspapers and newsletters
*announcements in ESL classes at Harborside
*word of mouth between current students and former students
*contacts with other ESL, adult education and Hispanic community agencies
*after the first cycle, an open house at the Center conducted by current literacy students in which they displayed and explained their work

Since there was no ongoing influx of potential Spanish literacy students at the site (unlike at the HMSC), students had to be convinced of the value of learning to read and write in Spanish during the initial recruitment contact itself. This seemed to be best accomplished through person-to-person informal contacts. Public efforts (announcements in churches, flyers, etc.) were least productive and invariably they yielded fewer results than face-to-face and word-of-mouth contacts between students (for example, broadly publicized informational meetings at the site were sparsely

attended). In contrast, one person, the sister of a student in a Spanish literacy class (in Cambridge) that Byron had visited, was key in recruiting the first students: she invited Byron to her house to talk about the program with a group of seven friends and relatives. He explained the benefits of learning to read and write in Spanish as a basis for ESL and they discussed their fears and hesitations. He then physically led the way to the Center so that they would know how to get there. Once this first group of students began to experience success, they told their friends and family members about the classes and, little by little, more students began to come. After about six months, the students themselves participated in recruitment more formally through an open house in which they shared their work and talked individually with prospective students.

Spanish literacy students at recruitment Open House (Harborside)

How was the concept of native language literacy discussed with students ?

The way that new students were introduced to the notion of being placed in native language literacy classes had certain features in common and certain differences at the two sites. In both cases, the initial rationale for L1 classes was framed in pedagogical terms for students; they were told that they would be in a special class designed for people with similar backgrounds and that it would make it easier for them to learn English in the long run. The key in convincing the Spanish literacy students seemed to be personally meeting the teacher/interns and discussing their fears/questions before coming to the Center. Students were also told that they could decide when they felt ready to begin learning English. Although Creole classes had already existed at the HMSC prior to the onset of the project, the notion of Creole literacy was met with some resistance by students who were new to the

concept when the project began. Thus, there was ongoing dialogue about the value of learning to read and write in Creole. Through this dialogue, literacy classes have become increasingly accepted as a regular stage in students' educational process. The next section examines how this change took place and the factors that shaped it.

The teacher/interns explained the rationale for Creole instruction during the first class sessions (except in cases where a prospective student privately told Jean-Marc prior to enrollment that he/she was worried about signing up for English class because they couldn't read and write; in this case, he told them that he had a class especially for them to help them work on their reading and writing and assured them that it would lead to English). Thus, the first part of the process of legitimating Creole was incorporating dialogue about it into the content of classes: one intern framed it in terms of the educational process in Haiti, saying that students in Haiti learn English only after they have already learned to read and write; they are accepted into English classes only after grade 6 or 7. Students who still said, "I didn't come to learn Creole, I came to learn English," were reassured that it would lead them to English and invited to try the Creole class for a little while before deciding whether to stay. If they were still reluctant, the teacher would suggest that they go to the ESL class and try it. Generally, they would come back and say, "OK, I'm going to stay here for three months..."

Despite these initial explanations in terms of the pedagogical benefits of Creole literacy, there seemed to be an undercurrent of discontent, connected to the broader issue of stigmatization of Creole. Jean-Marc decided to address this concern through a general meeting of the students from all the literacy classes. At this meeting, he invited students to voice their concerns. Some of their views were:

> *Creole just makes you more ignorant; people who are already educated (have the benefits of education) want the uneducated ones to learn Creole as a way of holding them back. Learning Creole is something that only lower class people do - it's a way of keeping us ignorant. We already speak Creole so why do we need to learn it? We want to learn English as quickly as possible. In Haiti, people make fun of young people who learn to read and write in Creole; learning Creole is only for old people.*

Students then took a vote; half opted for English instruction; a quarter wanted French and a quarter wanted Creole. After the vote, they asked the teachers for their opinions. Jean-Marc told the group that he believes that you learn how to read and write faster in a language you already speak than in one you don't know; if you know how to read and write in your own language it is easier to learn the second language. Through this process of dialogue and negotiation, students decided that the classes should be set up as half Creole and half English. In reality, once the process of introducing ESL began, the amount of time varied: initially students wanted more time, but as they began to see the value of Creole literacy, the time for ESL diminished until students had a solid basis in literacy; specific strategies for making the transition from L1 to ESL are discussed on page 95.

In a subsequent teacher-sharing session, we decided on three ways to follow up on this meeting. First, since the understanding of the rationale for Creole literacy was uneven among the group (some of the interns themselves were uncomfortable discussing it with students since they weren't fully convinced of its value) we decided to invite Creole specialists from the Boston area in to do a workshop for staff about the history of Creole, the rationale for Creole literacy and the literacy campaigns in Haiti. Second, we decided to continue focusing literacy lessons on the socio-political context for learning or not learning Creole. Third, we decided to invite an outside speaker for a center-wide meeting to discuss Creole literacy in the context of the history and political situation in Haiti.

Shortly thereafter, we had the first of several Saturday Creole workshops for staff (which a few students also attended), led by Haitian linguists and conducted in Creole. Since the interns themselves had become literate in French, rather than Creole, the workshop provided a context to convince them of the value and legitimacy of Creole as a language, deepen their own understanding of the rules of Creole orthography, as well as the history of Creole linguistics and the issues/logistics of Creole literacy instruction in Haiti (the literacy campaigns).

In addition, a community member who had worked in Misyon Alfa (Haiti's mass literacy campaign conducted by the Catholic church) was invited to speak about the campaign, its approach to literacy instruction, the relationship between literacy and national development, and the rationale for learning to read and write in Creole. The entire student body at the Center was invited to attend the meeting (which was held during class time) so that there would be center-wide dialogue about Creole. The speaker linked illiteracy to political oppression, and presented the stigmatization of Creole as a tool used by the elite to maintain social stratification. He explained that by forcing the masses to learn to read and write in their second language, and denying them education, the ruling classes had effectively silenced them and kept them from participating in the political and economic life of Haiti. He went on to explain how Misyon Alfa attempted to link education with social change through its approach of combining mechanical aspects of literacy acquisition with conscientization.

Students also spoke eloquently about their own experiences becoming literate. Many gave moving testimony about both the realities of life without literacy and changes in their lives since becoming literate. A key theme was that of respect. One student said that the real problem of Haiti isn't literacy per se; it is people's lack of respect for each other. Illiterate people are made to feel stupid: they are teased and called 'evening students' (because they go to school at night after work). She said that literacy doesn't make you able to think - you can think without literacy. For herself, becoming literate had meant a change both in how others viewed her and how she viewed herself - before she could read and write, people looked down on her; after she learned to read and write, her common-law husband had decided to marry her! Thus, the meeting went a long way toward legitimating the Creole component at the Center by making literacy students less ashamed about being illiterate, increasing the understanding between literacy and ESL students, making the issue of Creole literacy a center-wide concern, and situating it in a political context.

Several other factors contributed to the change in attitudes toward Creole among students. The general political situation in Haiti supported the process: the dialogue about "why Creole literacy" coincided with Aristide's election campaign in which respect for Creole was a central platform. In addition, teachers and interns continued to focus on the issue as part of curriculum content. Students explored their own educational histories - why they hadn't had a chance to go to school and what being illiterate meant to them - as well as the broader question of why there is so much illiteracy in Haiti. In one class, for example, this discussion was linked to a language experience story about a photograph of the Haitian Center (see p. 84). Further, students began to see through practical experience how Creole could be a bridge to English as teachers introduced English for a few hours per week (this bridging process is discussed further below). By the end of the first two months of the project, students had stopped asking to be switched to ESL classes; by the end of the first six months, the attitudes toward Creole had changed to such an extent that the waiting list for Creole classes increased, students sometimes requested to stay in the classes even when they were ready to leave, and advanced ESL students began to ask to join the classes so they could learn to read and write in Creole. The following list summarizes key aspects of this process as it developed at the HMSC.

Strategies for justifying L1 literacy instruction

*Discussing the relationship between L1 literacy and ESL acquisition with students

*Situating the issue in its broader socio-political and historical context (why people were unable to go to school in their home countries, why their L1 was devalued, how illiteracy was used as a tool for stratification)

*Inviting students to express and explore their resistance to L1 literacy

*Giving students choice: inviting them to try it for a limited time; alternatively, inviting students to try a beginning ESL class and then decide; negotiating the ratio of L1 literacy and ESL with them

*Integrating dialogue about the issue of L1 literacy into the curriculum itself; linking specific literacy activities with reflection on students' literacy histories

*Discussing the issue of L1 literacy with the whole center (not just literacy students) in order to legitimate it, prevent marginalization of the L1 literacy component, and create understanding between various groups of students

*Enhancing teachers' understanding of the history, linguistics and approaches to L1 literacy through workshops and training

*Incorporating specific and limited time for ESL instruction into literacy classes to demonstrate how L1 literacy can facilitate learning English.

How did the context of students' lives shape curriculum development?

Since the essence of a participatory approach to literacy/ESL education is allowing the issues and concerns that preoccupy students to become the motor force of instruction, the starting point for curriculum development has to be an understanding of students' lives - their backgrounds, personal histories, strengths, and current situations. In many adult ESL programs, students are interviewed during in-take and composite profiles of the student populations are constructed for assessment and placement purposes. However, once students enter the classroom, these profiles, which include general information about years of schooling, occupational status, reasons for immigration, etc. may be ignored in the push to work on competencies or survival skills for the new life in the U.S. Our experience is that each of these aspects of students' lives has real consequences for what happens in the classroom, and, further, that these general profiles only tell the beginning of the story. There are powerful stories behind student profiles which affect learning and participation, stories which can only be uncovered through classroom interaction. Thus, the starting point for participatory curriculum development must be learning about the students, and understanding the contextual factors in their lives which shape their literacy acquisition.

In terms of the general profiles of the students in our project, as we said in Section II, there was a great deal of variation both within and between sites. At the JMCS, for example, students in the beginning ESL classes represented 26 different nationality groups, had a variety of educational histories (from finishing only a few years of school to graduating from college), and came from both urban and rural backgrounds. They ranged in age from late teens to pensioners. They were both refugees and immigrants, here for political, personal and/or economic reasons. Regardless of their educational backgrounds, many were employed in low-wage manufacturing or service sector jobs, working in factories, restaurants, hotels, hospitals or as housecleaners.

At the HMSC, most of the literacy students had either never gone to school or gone only for a few years. There seemed to be three distinct groups of students in the literacy classes. The first were older people (mainly women) who had come to the U.S. many years ago, but lived in a virtually all-Haitian community (perhaps staying home to care for family); for them, the learning process was often a slow and challenging struggle. While many of them had worked in the markets or other kinds of self-employment in Haiti, most were unemployed in the U.S. The second group had come more recently and, of these, some were quite young (in their late teens or early twenties); for them, the Creole literacy component was a first encounter with schooling. They often moved more quickly through the initial stages of literacy acquisition and were ready for ESL classes before the older students. In the final year of the project, the HMSC became a resettlement site for refugees who had fled Haiti after the coup against the Aristide government; they were primarily men, from a range of educational backgrounds, separated from their families and living in groups. Many of them were also enthusiastic and quick learners, participating in many site activities beyond classes.

The profile of students at Harborside went through various phases. The first group of students was quite homogeneous: they were peasants and fishermen from El Salvador. As the project developed, new students from other Central American countries (Guatemala and Costa Rica) enrolled; while they too were primarily from rural environments, some of them came from urban backgrounds; a few students from Puerto Rico started classes near the end of the project. Students ranged in age from their twenties to forties. Many of them had experienced war and political repression as well as economic struggles in their homelands. They often worked in the most marginalized jobs (washing dishes, cleaning offices, working in the lowest paid factory jobs) - when they could find work.

The differences in students' situations at different sites had direct implications for the development of the curriculum: for example, while at the HMSC, some classes focused on strategies for looking for work (because unemployment was so high), classes at the JMCS and Harborside, where more students are working (but in marginalized jobs), focused on workplace rights and discrimination on the job. At the same time, while these general profiles of the student populations shaped curriculum choices, we found that it was important to go beyond them to look more closely at the particular meanings of students' circumstances. As we discovered, the reality behind these profiles has powerful consequences for the day-to-day learning that takes place. The lived experiences behind these profiles, and the stories embedded in them (which can be only be uncovered through classroom interaction), often shaped what went on in the classroom.

In the case of the HMSC, for example, the fact that so many of the literacy students were unemployed had very real consequences for both the atmosphere and the content of classes. On a very practical level, it meant that students sometimes had to miss classes because they didn't have the bus fare. Students were often preoccupied with worries about how they would be able to survive, which, in turn, affected their ability to concentrate. As one student said, "I could learn more, but because I have a lot of problems, my mind is not here." This presented a dilemma and a challenge for teachers: while they wanted to help students address this problem, the reality is that during a time of recession, prospects for Haitians with few English or literacy skills are bleak. Julio responded to this situation in one of his classes, where only two of eleven students were working, by inviting a job counselor to talk about the process of finding a job in the U.S., as well as talking about the whole economic situation in the U.S. Most importantly, teachers gave students space to talk about their concerns and linked them to literacy teaching. Students talked about coming to class so they wouldn't have to stay home and think about their problems by themselves: they have nothing at home, no TV, no music; as one of them said, "My house is like a jail." In one class, they wrote about these concerns in their dialogue journals. Many said that the class was the only place they could really talk about their problems.

More complicated aspects of students' live also often only emerged through classroom interaction. For example, issues relating to immigration status and regulations were commonplace for students in project classes. Students were often separated from their families for either economic or bureaucratic reasons. At Harborside, this meant that frequently students (and in one case, even an intern)

had to leave the country for an extended period in order to comply with INS regulations or to tend to family business. It also meant that learning to write letters to family members was an important student goal.

> One Haitian student had to go back to Haiti so that she could get her green card; while she was in the U.S., she had had a baby and the baby had been put on Medicaid because her father had been laid off. When the mother arrived in Haiti, she was told she couldn't come back to the U.S. because the baby was on Medicaid - so the baby was in the U.S. and the mother had to stay in Haiti. Another student had nine children, four of whom were in Boston and five in Haiti; although the mother had no source of income, she couldn't apply for welfare because that would jeopardize her chances of bringing her other five children to the U.S. Thus, she had to choose between the immediate needs of her children in the U.S. and the future needs of the children in Haiti.

These are the kinds of stories that are the real profiles of students, the stories that don't come out in surveys or interviews but that shape day to day classroom interaction and that must be addressed in order for learning to take place.

Another factor which shaped student participation in classes was the political situation in their home countries. Thus, for example, because students from Central America had often been directly affected by war or other aspects of political repression, discussion of their past lives had to be handled with great sensitivity. Some of the participants in the first group of students at Harborside had started another literacy program earlier but left it because the methodology focused a great deal on direct discussion of the political situations in their countries; they were upset when the teacher introduced these topics as the primary vehicle for literacy development. Yet, in the Harborside classes, when they themselves had more control over selection of the curriculum content, they sometimes introduced these issues themselves. Understanding the complexity of students' responses to their backgrounds was key in knowing when and how to talk about issues of immigration.

Likewise, the changing political situation in Haiti had an enormous and pervasive influence on both the content and atmosphere of classes at the HMSC. For example, at the time of Aristide's campaign and election, there was a great deal of energetic class discussion about various political perspectives, the history of Haiti, the processes of political change (and especially the role of literacy in this process) in many of the classes. Even day-to-day events in Haiti became the focus of classwork: for example, when a political meeting about preventing violence was interrupted by gunfire and assassinations in Port-au-Prince, the students generated a language experience story about this event which became the focus of a week-long unit. Of course, the coup against Aristide affected both the mood and the content of classes. The first step for teachers was to figure out how to go on despite the overwhelming

desolation and anger that they and their students felt. As teachers said in a teacher-sharing meeting, there was no way to proceed without dealing with students' feelings about what had happened. Teachers responded in a variety of different ways; in one case, the teacher linked the coup to a discussion about the importance of education (the role of education in building a new Haiti) and this became a way to get students motivated to get back to literacy work. In another class, the teacher linked the current situation to the history of Haiti, the assassination of Dessalines, and then brought in proverbs that represented the situation in Haiti; these proverbs became the basis for some literacy work which, as the teacher said, began to 'renormalize' the class. A third teacher invited students to express their feelings about the coup in English; they started by writing an English account of the story (using the Language Experience Approach), and then generated their own wh-questions (What happened? How did it happen? Who is responsible? When did it happen? Where is Aristide now? Why did it happen? etc.) The teacher then brought in an English newspaper article which the class read and answered *wh-* questions about. He went on to relate the current situation to Haitian history, including important dates and events relating to Haitian independence; in this case, students generated wh- questions to ask the teacher (eg., Where does the name of Haiti come from? Who were the first Haitians?).

Violence and neighborhood safety were another aspect of the context of students' lives which shaped participation. Students often talked about being afraid to come to class at night; evening classes got smaller when the time changed and it got dark earlier. They told about having their purses snatched or their apartments broken into and there were periodic fluctuations in attendance corresponding to particular incidents of crime in the neighborhood. In many cases, this issue was incorporated into lesson content: students talked or wrote about their experiences and fears as well as generating strategies for addressing them (carpooling, walking in groups, etc.). One of the classes, for example, wrote a language experience story about a student who was robbed; they then wrote about an attack that had taken place in Haiti; finally, they analyzed the differences between violence in Boston and that in Haiti, concluding that the former was economic while the latter was political.

From context to content: How can issues be uncovered and used for instruction?

The very power of the circumstances in students' lives means that they have to be taken into account in teaching; contextual factors like those discussed above affect attendance, the mood in the classroom, and the progress of learning. While traditionally these factors might be dealt with primarily through structures external to the instructional process (by counseling, attendance regulations, legal assistance, etc.), in a participatory approach, issues that preoccupy students are central to the content of instruction itself (although, of course, support services are also important). The overview of participatory curriculum development presented in the training section (p. 46) also guided and informed the curriculum development process for the literacy classes. In general the process entails learning about students (their concerns, histories and strengths), exploring their issues, developing

language/literacy through the use of participatory tools and generativng strategies for addressing problems collectively.

Thus, a key aspect of the instructional process is uncovering stories like the ones in the previous section so that they can become vehicles for literacy and language development. Very often, however, these stories only begin to surface once a basis of trust has been built. As such, part of the art of teaching is creating an atmosphere where students feel comfortable in sharing their stories. In our project, the fact that the teachers and interns had, themselves, experienced some of the same situations and come from similar circumstances went a long way toward creating this atmosphere. However, in itself, this was not enough. While some of the interns initially thought that the way to find students' needs was just to ask them what they wanted to do, whenever they asked this question, the response was, "You're the teacher, you're supposed to tell us what to do." They quickly discovered that being student-centered entails more than just asking students for their input: it entails consciously listening for opportunities to build on issues of importance to students, as well as creating a structured framework for eliciting these issues.

Thus, one way that teachers and interns were able to find students' issues was through **conscious listening.** This process entails being tuned in to classroom dynamics and 'off-the-record' spontaneous conversations that occured before, during, or after class, which may become content for language and literacy work. Teachers would often walk in on heated discussions of events in the news, in students' personal lives or in the community as class was starting; alternatively, a tension or debate might erupt unexpectedly during the course of a lesson. In some cases, teachers would then follow-up on these issues immediately (by incorporating the discussion into the lesson - pulling out key words or developing a language experience story); in other cases, the teacher would think about the issue, discuss how to handle it and develop a lesson related to it for a subsequent class.

*At the JMCS, interns noted a tension between some students who talked to each other in their native language and others who wanted to use only English in class. They developed a code about the issue; the class discussed the code in small groups, wrote up responses to questions about it and developed guidelines for the class.

*In a transitional ESL class at the HMSC, an argument erupted between students because one, who had strong oral English skills (although her reading and writing were weaker), often jumped in, dominating many of the discussions; the others resented this and seemed to see her as a 'know-it-all'. The intern decided to follow-up on it by bringing in a code about classroom dynamics (a series of drawings of a class in which one person does all the talking and the others fall asleep one by one).

However, it is not enough to rely on conscious listening as the main way to find student issues. First, it is hard to predict when issues will arise spontaneously; especially at the beginning of a cycle, before students are comfortable bringing their experiences and concerns into class, the times that issues emerge in this way may be few and far between. Further, learning how to 'hear' these issues and then utilize them is a skill which develops over time. In addition, even when students' concerns have surfaced and been introduced into the classroom, students may not feel that discussing them is 'real' school work: no matter how compelling a discussion may be, students may see it as a diversion from what they are supposed to be doing (worksheets, grammar lessons, dictations, etc.). Through their prior schooling or their children's schooling they may have an internalized model of education that is quite traditional. Thus, centering the curriculum around students' issues entails more than just asking students what they want to do, waiting for issues to arise or 'going with the flow.'

One way of addressing students' expectations is by creating space for them to step back and reflect on their own learning. This can be done by inviting them to compare and evaluate different types of activity. This kind of meta-talk about learning and students' expectations of schooling is an important part of moving toward a curriculum centered around student issues.

> In one class, the students became very involved in discussions about violence; however, when the teacher asked them if they wanted to continue these discussions or work on exercises from a text, they chose the latter. The text focused on calling 911 and included substitution drills. The students struggled with these exercises and seemed bored. When the teacher asked, "Have you ever had to call 911? What happened?" stories began to pour out and suddenly the class came alive again. The teacher then asked students to stop and reflect on what had just happened in terms of both the difference in their involvement/interest level and the difference in their ability to express themselves in English. The students themselves noted that when content revolved around real issues in their lives, their English was significantly better. They went on to write a language experience story about an encounter with the police. The following day, a student came in and announced, "I have a story today," indicating a new acceptance of the idea of centering instruction around students' stories.

Gradually, as students became accustomed to the notion that their issues and interests can become the content of learning, they begin to bring in topics themselves. For example, when the Gulf War erupted, students in many of the classes asked the teacher to focus on it.

However, it is not enough to wait for students to initiate topics. A central way to legitimate an issue-centered approach involves introducing structured

activities (or **tools**) which draw out dialogue while at the same time developing literacy and language. Barndt (1986) has suggested the notion of a **tool kit** of resources that teachers can draw from to elicit or develop themes. For her, tools are concrete ways of representing an issue (photos, drawings, socio-drama, etc.), designed to generate active responses, dialogue and language/ literacy work. The tools which emerged as key in our project are listed below and each is explained further on subsequent pages. Some of these are widely utilized in literacy education, while others were developed by the interns themselves. They served the function of linking loaded thematically-based content with structured literacy work, thus providing a concrete format to focus dialogue so that it counted as "real work" in students' eyes. In most cases, a combination of different tools was used to explore any given theme. Thus, for example, a class may have started with a discussion, pulled out key words, developed a language experience story, read a related published text and written about the topic in journals.

Tools for Participatory Curriculum Development

*Key words

*Pictures and photos

*Published materials

- *literacy or ESL texts
- *authentic texts (newspapers, leaflets, cartoons, etc.)
- *published student writings

*Culturally familiar genre (proverbs, riddles, songs)

*Language experience stories (LEA)

*Codes

*Student-generated writing

- *Dialogue journals
- *Letters
- *Magazine articles

*Photostories

Key words

Key words are a primary tool for initial literacy instruction in that they offer the opportunity for both dialogue and decoding activities. They are chosen for their powerful meaning in students' lives (representing some important concept or issue for them) as well as for their structural features and can be used in initial literacy, transitional and beginning ESL classes. Once the significance of the words and issues they represent has been explored, the words themselves become a way to link the discussion to further literacy activities. They can be broken into syllables, used to generate new words or used as vocabulary for follow-up language experience stories, dialogue journal writing, etc.. Listed below are four ways that key words were used in our project:

To introduce themes and elicit dialogue: In this case the teacher introduces a key word based on his/her own knowledge of what may be important to students. A concept which has been introduced by a key word can be elaborated by a clustering exercise in which students free associate the word with other words/ideas it brings to mind; from the clustering, students can develop ideas and see interconnections. Teachers can ask "What does this word make you think of? How have you experienced this?" and go on to explore the commonalities between people's experiences, their social causes, etc.

*At Harborside, Byron started with relatively neutral words (like Valentine's Day and family) to introduce the concept of key words. Students discussed the word in terms of their own experiences (eg. how related holidays are celebrated in their countries), broke it into syllables and created new words from it. Once students were used to the method, he brought in more loaded words; for example, in working on the -sc combination, they discussed the word *pesca* (fishing) which led to an analysis of different fishing gear and students jobs in the fisheries in Boston. This led to discussion of workplace problems.

*Interns at the JMCS introduced the word "food" in a beginning ESL class. In small groups, students discussed food in different countries, cheap and expensive food, and why there is so much food in the U.S. but so little in other countries.

*At the HMSC, interns and the Master Teacher developed a list of key words representing critical themes in students' lives in the U.S. The list was modeled on words used in Creole literacy text from Haiti, but adapted because the words in the text are not relevant for the U.S. context.

To follow-up on dialogue: In this case, the teacher pulls key words out of a discussion that has been triggered through some other means (a picture, a news story, etc.); thus, rather than introducing the words, the teacher either selects them from an ongoing dialogue or asks students to select them (either because of their significance or because they represent vocabulary students want to learn).

After viewing a video about the inauguration of Aristide in Haiti, a beginning ESL class discussed the video, first in terms of what they had seen and then in terms of how it related to their lives. The teacher wrote what the students were saying as they spoke. The teacher then asked them to find five words that they "liked best" in the story. They chose: *president, money, freedom, Tonton Macoute* and *peace*. The teacher then asked them to make sentences using the key words, but, instead, many of them wrote stories. The steps of the process were:

1. Viewing of video
2. Discussion of video
3. Group language experience story
4. Key words
5. Individual writing (sentences or stories)
6. Language/grammar work (correction of student writing)

To follow up on a reading: Once students have developed beyond initial literacy, key words can be selected from a reading to generate further dialogue and writing.

After identifying problems with employers as an issue at Harborside, Byron introduced a reading about workplace rights. Once the group had read the text together, he put the key word *discriminación* on the board as a way to facilitate discussion of the text and elicit students' own experiences. The group then did a clustering exercise to elaborate the concept and went on to write about particular problems at work and strategies for addressing them (see p.).

As a transition to English: Teachers can elicit key words in the students' first language as a bridge to English (see pp. for examples).

Byron used clustering and key words to help find themes for the transition to ESL. He first elicited key words from students in response to the question, "What do you think you need to know in English?" He then asked them to pick one word and from that word, did a clustering exercise to generate ideas for lessons. Julio elicited words in Creole that students wanted to be able to say in English. These examples are presented in the section on the transition to ESL.

Pictures and photos

Unlike traditional visual aids, the function of pictures or photos in a participatory classroom is to uncover themes or to evoke powerful responses. As such, the pictures themselves should represent a loaded, easily recognizable issue or dilemma from students' lives. Once again, this tool can trigger dialogue which, in turn, may lead to a range of literacy activities - language experience stories, student writing and reading, as well as vocabulary and conversation development in ESL classes.

*Byron brought in a picture of a shovel (representing the key word *pala* in Spanish). While he thought he might get a response, he didn't imagine it would be so strong: students talked for at least 45 minutes about the uses of shovels in their lives, telling stories about being forced by the police to bury people in their villages in El Salvador. They went on to discuss using shovels in the fields, crops, the various agricultural methods they used in their countries, etc. As they spoke, he wrote down what they were saying, including other key words which became the focus of subsequent lessons.

*At the JMCS, Ana brought in two newspaper pictures taken during the Gulf War as a way to integrate grammar work with a discussion of current events. Both pictures were taken on the same day; one showed a woman sitting in the ruins of her home and the other showed a smiling President and his wife walking their dog. Ana started by asking small groups to generate lists of adjectives describing each picture. She then listed the adjectives they had come up with and asked them to use the adjectives to write about the pictures. Many things came out in their writings: one student had lived in Iraq for many years; another had a brother in the Gulf. The discussion which emerged when students shared their writings was far-reaching, ending with an analysis of the budget - the percentage that goes to the military, services for immigrants, etc.

*At the HMSC, one of the interns found a series of drawings representing different loaded situations - people involved in robberies, drug deals, courtroom scenes, etc. She used these pictures as a context for dialogue as well as a way to address the issue of mixed levels within one class; she asked students to discuss the pictures in small, mixed-level groups: those who were not able to write yet told their interpretations of the pictures to the more advanced students, who wrote the stories.

Published materials

Both interns and students felt a strong need for published materials to guide the teaching-learning process. Textbooks can provide continuity, develop learning in an organized and sequenced way, and give students a sense of progression. Students want books: books make them feel that their learning is 'real.' In addition, teachers often don't have the time or the experience to continuously generate their own materials; they want the security and structure that a textbook provides (even if they don't rely on it exclusively).

However, there are a number of problems relating to materials. The first, of course, for native language literacy classes, is that there are few textbooks available, and those that do exist are often not suitable for literacy acquisition in the U.S. context, for adults, and/or for a participatory approach to literacy instruction. Most of the existing Haitian Creole literacy texts were developed for literacy campaigns in Haiti, and, as such, use key words and concepts that relate to conditions and realities which are not always relevant for immigrants or refugees in the U.S.. Gouté Sel, for example, is a problem-posing text which embodies principles of a Freirean approach to literacy acquisition; however, many of the themes are geared toward rural peasants in a Haitian context. Other books from Haiti are written for children and, as such, have childish illustrations and/or content which is patronizing and unconnected to adult learners' lives.

Second, while some texts may focus on decontextualized, mechanical and rote learning, emphasizing decoding rather than meaning-making, others may promote such an explicitly political agenda that students are put off by them; for example, several students in Byron's classes had left another program because it used a Spanish literacy text which focused on issues of war and emigration from Central America. Although students may discuss similar issues if they are approached less directly, they may resist if a text dictates this kind of overtly political theme as the framework for literacy acquisition.

Finally, the fact that there are so few texts available means that there is both a lack of diversity in materials (resulting in boredom) and a limited range of levels: any given text may be suitable for one subgroup of students but not another because it is either too easy or too hard. Even for beginning ESL, where there is an abundance of commercial texts, finding a single, appropriate text was problematic, again because the texts may be patronizing, mechanical, and not geared toward a participatory, learner-centered approach which incorporates students' concerns and reflects the realities of their lives. Of course, many experienced teachers reject the notion of relying on a single text anyway: they say that, by definition, no one text can meet the evolving needs of students and that, further, texts should be seen as resources rather than blueprints or motors for curriculum development. In our project, interns went through several stages in their thinking about and use of published texts:

*Using published literacy texts: The first stage was to use literacy texts developed for other contexts; as they began to see the limitations of these texts, they rejected them as unsuitable, looked for the 'perfect' text and lamented the lack of

good texts available. However, they soon began to see that they could adapt materials written for another context to the U.S. context by framing dialogue in terms of how an issue related to students' lives here (with questions like, "How is life different here? How do you experience this problem in Boston?").

*Using authentic materials: As interns saw the limitations of relying exclusively on textbooks, they began to bring in a range of other, authentic materials (written for real purposes beyond literacy instruction): newspaper articles, cartoons, leaflets, etc. On several occasions, interns asked their family members in their home countries to send or bring back materials which could be used in classes, so that a growing set of resources was collected for use in classes.

*Using published student writing: Among the most powerful published materials that interns used were texts written by students from other literacy programs. The two most often used sources were Voices, the magazine of student writings published in Invegarry, British Columbia, and I Told Myself I am Going to Learn (Elizabeth Ndaba), a photo-story about a South African woman's struggles with her husband as she decides to go back to school. These materials were powerful first because of their compelling content: they reflect the real voices, stories and concerns of adults like learners in the project. Second, because they have a beautiful and accessible lay-out, they engage learners visually: the photographs support the texts and invite interest. In addition, because the format is glossy, they seem 'real' and satisfy the desire to work from a book. Finally, because the stories are written by students, they can become a model of and basis for student writing. When the South African book was first shown to ESL students at the HMSC, they all wanted to know how they could buy their own copies. In a Creole literacy class, students predicted what was going on from the pictures, discussed the issues in Creole and used the story as a model of their own photo-story (see p. 93). The following list combines strategies that interns used with articles from Voices.

1. The teacher shows the class a picture, asks some questions about it and writes their responses on the board.
2. The students make questions about the story based on their answers.
3. The class reads the story together.
4. They pick out new vocabulary to work on.
5. They discuss the story in terms of how it relates to their lives.
6. They write a group language experience story based on their reactions, using vocabulary and ideas.
7. They do a dictation to test their knowledge of the vocabulary.

Thus, although there continues to be the need and desire for good published texts, the interns and teachers got to the point where they did what many experienced teachers do: they integrated existing literacy texts into ongoing activities, adapted them and used them to supplement a wide range of other materials and activities.

Culturally familiar activities and genre: proverbs, riddles, songs

Because of their own familiarity with the cultures of the learners, teachers and interns were able to integrate into instruction both forms and processes that were culturally congruent for learners. For example, when I visited one class, there was a sudden (and, to me, mystifying) silence after five minutes of active conversation. When I asked the teacher about it later, she said that the participants were saying a silent prayer: this was a way for them to formalize the learning that was about to begin, honor its significance, and signal the official start of class. Teachers integrated other instructional processes that are used infrequently in the U.S. such as dictation and choral reading. While on the surface some of these forms (eg. dictation) may seem to contradict a meaning-based approach literacy acquisition, the fact that they were integrated with less traditional activities (LEA stories, codes, etc.), seemed to make the approach more acceptable in the students' eyes. On other occasions, both culturally familiar genre (riddles, songs and fables or folktales) and content (traditional medicine, religious practices or beliefs) became the vehicle for literacy acquisition. The most formal example of this was the development of a proverb book at the HMSC.

Several years prior to this project, a group of teachers at another Creole literacy program had begun to develop an alphabet book using Haitian proverbs to introduce each letter. Although the book had never been completed, there was a copy at the HMSC. It became the basis for an extended discussion in which the literacy project teachers and interns reviewed each proverb, the accompanying picture, and its underlying message. Through this process, the group revised and expanded the original book, changing some of the proverbs or pictures because, for example, they seemed demeaning to women or represented fatalistic messages. Criteria for inclusion of a proverb were that its message be applicable to life in the U.S., that it be widely known and familiar (not obscure), and that it would evoke discussion (that it be somehow problematic, open to a range of interpretations, etc.). The group also generated the following questions to guide discussion of each proverb:

What does this proverb mean to you? (literal meaning and figurative meaning)
What does it make you think of?
Can you tell the story of this picture?
How does this proverb apply to life in the U.S.?
Can you think of another proverb with a similar meaning?
Can you think of another proverb that begins with the same sound?

Ayiti

Aa

Ayiti se tè glise.

Language experience stories (LEA)

One of the most effective tools for connecting dialogue and literacy work in our project was the Language Experience Approach (LEA). When interns were first introduced to the participatory approach, they often were quite successful in generating dialogue and in engaging the class in discussions of current events, critical incidents in their lives or the lives of their communities, etc. At the same time, however, some had difficulty integrating these discussions with 'work.' Thus, there was sometimes a gap between discussions and literacy activities, which focused on decoding and mechanical skills work. The LEA was a concrete way of making the transition from discussions to reading and writing activities. There were several ways of getting into LEA stories. The first was as a follow-up to a class discussion of a heated topic. Thus, for example, if students were talking about the Gulf war, the teacher might ask, "What would you like to write about the war?" The students would then dictate a story which the teacher wrote on the board. This, in turn, might be followed by a range of literacy activities (selecting key words, working on corrections or a particular grammar point, generating student writing about the topic, etc.). Alternatively, the teacher might take notes while discussion was in progress and type the story for further work and reflection in later classes.

POUKISA LA GÈ FET

Se pou petròl la gè ya fèt.

Nou pa renmen la gè ya paske tròp moun mouri.

Nou ta renmen la pè.

Meriken bezwen pran tè Kowet ke Saddam pran.

Saddam di li pa bay li.

Eske Meriken gen rezon pou lal goumen pou yon koz ki pa pou li.

WHY THERE IS WAR?

It is for oil that the war started

We do not like the war because too many people die.

We would like peace.

Americans want to take Koweit back from Saddam.

Saddam said that he will not withdraw.

Do Americans have the right to fight for something

Which is not theirs?

Student photography plus LEA

Some of the classes also used a technique of combining student photography with LEA stories. Students were given a Polaroid camera overnight and told to take a picture of "something important in the lives of Haitians in Boston". Thus, their photos became a way of both identifying importanat themes for the students and catalyzing discussion for LEA stories and reflection. The process included the following steps:

1. Finding themes: Each student was given the camera for one night and told to take three pictures of something important to Haitians in Boston.

2. Choosing themes: Once several students had had the chance to take pictures, the pictures were spread out on the table and students selected the one they wanted to work on that day.

3. Dialogue: The following questions were used to start the dialogue:

   What do you see in the picture? What is this a picture of?
   What does this picture mean to you?
   What do you think of when you see this picture?
   Why is it important for Haitians in Boston?

4. Key words: As students talked about the question "What does the picture make you think of?", the teacher wrote the key words on the board, listening to what they said and picking out central ideas.

5. LEA story: Then students talked about the question, "What do you want to say about this picture?" going back and forth between elaborating ideas and figuring out how they wanted to write them. Each student contributed one sentence to the story.

6. Reading: The teacher read the story to the group; the group read it together; individuals read sentences with others' support.

7. Follow-up: The story was typed with follow-up questions and key word exercises (grouping key words into patterns, etc.) and followed by more group and individual reading.

LEKOL SE LIMYE

Lekòl enpotan pou nou. Li develope atansyon nou paske le nou pakonn li nou pran anpil imiliasyon. Lekol bay plis developman. Lekol la se yon nesesite le w pakonn li ou nan fenwa. Lekol se limye. Lekol se pi gwo nesesite nan yon zon. Li te difisil pou elev yo tal lekol akoz neglijans paran yo.

School is Light

School is very important for us. It helps us develop our potential because without it we feel great humiliation. School helps us develop. School is a necessity because when you are illiterate you are always in the dark. School is light. School is the greatest necessity in life. It was difficult for some students to go to school because of their parents' negligence.

The picture on the preceding page prompted students to discuss why education is so important for them now and what had happened in their own lives to prevent them from attending school. After telling their stories, they went on to discuss the more general question about why so many Haitians had never gone to school. They talked about economic factors, about being forced to drop out of school to help support their families or to take care of younger children; they talked about parents not wanting daughters in particular to go away to school, the government not wanting them to be educated, and the high cost of books. According to Romeo, the intern who worked with this class, *"Students love this method. They can read because the picture and story come from them... They like this because they are interested in their own work."* He also noted that it has increased their participation: they no longer wait for the teacher to tell them what to do or follow his lead in expressing opinions.

Theater techniques and LEA

Another way in to LEA writing is through the use of theater techniques. Some of the interns began to experiment with these techniques after the training workshop on theater. The following example illustrates how one intern used theater both to motivate students and to elicit stories for LEA work.

> Champtale, an intern at the HMSC, came to class one night and noticed that students seemed to be tired and without energy. She decided to do a warm-up activity to get them motivated. She started by explaining that the first activity would get them energized for work and asked them to stand in a circle and clap their hands with each other. After they had done this, she explained the purpose of the next activity, saying it is easier to have a dialogue by acting out the idea first. She then asked them to form two groups and choose a word which was meaningful to them. Each group acted out the word; the other group described each act afterwards and then guessed what the word was. One group chose the word *malad* (sick) and the other group chose the word *pov* (poor). After the acting, the students dictated a story about each word. Champtale then typed up the stories and formulated some questions as a follow-up activity.

Problem-posing codes

Another way to follow-up on a theme which had been identified through the course of classroom interaction is to develop a code.[2] In this case, the teacher selects or creates materials which represent a problem or dilemma facing students. Rather than the teacher solving the problem for students or referring them to an outside support service/expert, the issue is posed back to the group in the form of a picture or a short dialogue. The code depersonalizes the problem (framing it in a somewhat abstracted way so that it doesn't refer to the specific dilemma, but represents its various aspects); in this way, learners can get some distance on the issue and generalize about a specific problem. Thus, a code should represent the problem in a simple way so that it is familiar (but not personal) and evokes a reaction: students should be able to immediately identify the situation or dilemma but it should be presented in a two-sided way; its purpose is to set the stage for critical thinking and reflection so that learners understand the problem more deeply and generate their own strategies for addressing it (rather than having a 'correct' solution imposed or the problem solved *for* them).

Once reactions have been triggered by the code, the teacher guides students through a structured five step dialogue process: first they describe what they see in the code (who is talking? what is happening?); then, they identify the problem represented by the code (what is the problem here?); then, they relate the problem to their own experience (do you know anyone who has been in a similar situation? how have you experienced this problem?); in the fourth stage, students discuss the root causes of the problem (how has this problem come to be? what is happening in the broader society that causes this problem?); finally, students share ways of addressing the problem (what have you done in a similar situation? what can we do about this problem?). In this final stage, collective action is stressed over individual action since this is often more effective and reinforces collaboration.

Teachers and interns in our project used problem-posing codes to address a wide range of problems from issues of classroom dynamics (eg. how to deal with a student who talked too much, how much ESL the literacy classes should do each week) to workplace and community issues. In addition, they often used a problem-posing approach even when they did not develop specific codes to represent an issue - that is, they would pose the issue back to the group for dialogue and implement strategies generated by the group.

One example of this occurred at the HMSC at a point when so many parents were bringing their children to classes that it had become disruptive; some students asked the teacher to 'do something' about it. Yet, if the children were not allowed to come, the students couldn't come either because they had nowhere to take their children. The teacher, rather than solving the problem for the students, posed the dilemma back to them. Coincidentally, at around the same time, some of the literacy students said that they wanted drivers' education classwork so that they could get their licenses. A Haitian man who owned a drivers' ed school had offered

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[2]The term *code* was adapted by Nina Wallerstein (1983) from Freire's notion of codification for ESL instruction.

to provide classes free of charge at the Center for the literacy students. When the teacher posed the daycare dilemma back to the students, they came up with the idea of charging a nominal fee to people who wanted drivers' ed classes and using this money to pay for a babysitter. Although this actually only turned out to be a short-term solution (for a variety of logistical reasons), it showed the power of students to generate creative solutions when problems are posed back to them.

Interns at the JMCS wrote up the following description of how they used a code to deal with another issue of classroom dynamics.

" IN MY CLASS "

In our beginnig ESL classes we have about nine nationalities. It is very exciting to work with them as well as to listen them speaking different languages. Sometimes, however, it can be disturbing for students who do not understand each other languages.

In both classes we created a code about different languages, we asked them to act it out in class, following up the acting part we devided the class in small groups to talk about it using the questions as mentioned below.

The students had a lively discussion about our class and came up with several sugestions themselves. In one class they decided to speak English only, in our other class students allowed themselves to sometimes explain things in their own languages.

." IN MY CLASS "

Teacher: Now we are going to use Do-Does to make questions.
Estela: ¿Qué dice el profesor que no entiendo?
Ana: Que vamos a...
Ediane: Excuseme, I do not understand Spanish. Can you speak English please?
Nicole: Yes, this is an English class.
Estela: I don't understand English.
Ana: Me neither.
Teacher: We need to learn more English guys.
Ediane: Very good teacher, we have to speak English.
Laudize: Yes, I think so, too.
Ediane: Eu não sei porque eles sempre têm que falar em Spanhol.
Estela: Excuseme, what are you talking about?
Ana: We don't speak Portuguese.
Nicole: Me neither.
Teacher: I think it is a good idea to talk about different languages in the class today. What do you think?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you think there is a problem? What is the problem?
2. Does this play remind you of our class?
3. Do you think we have to speak English in class only? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think students speak other languages in classes?
5. What does the Teacher do with this problem?
6. What do you think we can do about it?

Student-generated writing

Despite the fact that many of the students in the literacy classes knew only a few letters and were not comfortable with the physical aspects of writing (holding a pencil, letter formation) when they began classes, most were able to do some independent, meaningful writing after about six months. Several factors supported the development of their writing. The first was the modeling that took place in class through the group LEA process: students collectively went through a composing process, linking their ideas to written form with the support of the teacher and peers; they moved through various stages from this supported group writing to individual writing which, in turn, progressed from words to sentences to longer pieces. Second was the fact that meaning was stressed over form: students were encouraged to take risks and teachers responded to their writing in terms of its content more than its surface features. Third, students were encouraged to write for real communicative purposes, for real audiences and about topics that were important to them. Fourth, they were immersed in contexts where student writing was valued: they read published pieces by other students, and saw peers working on writing and having it published in site magazines; they were included in this community of writers as their own writing sometimes was 'published' - that is, typed up and presented in a formal format, or reproduced in student magazines.

Thus, both of the first language literacy components demonstrated that if the focus is on meaning and issues of importance to learners (rather than just on mechanical aspects of form), even the most beginning level learners can produce rich, substantive pieces; further, formal aspects of their writing (spelling, sentence formation, handwriting) become increasingly well-developed through this process.

A number of formats or genres were utilized by different classes in the project, including: **dialogue journals** (where students wrote privately, primarily for themselves and the teacher), **letters** (where the audience was one other person, either another literacy student or a family member), and **articles for publication** in site magazines (where the audience was public and unknown).

Dialogue journals: Dialogue journals are a place where teachers and students can have a written conversation on a private, one-to-one basis. In theory, students write about whatever they want to (although, in our experience, they may need to go through some guided steps before they are comfortable initiating topics of their own); teachers write back to students just as they would to a peer, responding communicatively in terms of the meaning or content, rather than attending to form. Their responses model correct usage, but don't explicitly correct students' mistakes. They can be a powerful tool for literacy development because: 1) they provide a place for students to express their ideas without being preoccupied with form; 2) they provide for one-to-one interaction between teachers and students; 3) teachers' responses model correct usage without focusing on form as the main objective; 4) they provide coherent, sequential documentation of student progress.

Both the interns and the students went through various stages of development in using journals. At the HMSC, the process started when one intern took the initiative to give her students bluebooks and invited them to write about anything

that came into their minds. She explained that a dialogue was like a written conversation between two people. Students liked the physical form of the journals (university bluebooks) because they looked official and school-like; they also liked the idea of having their own place to write. However, they were somewhat confused about the directions and used the bluebooks to write vocabulary. This prompted us to do a teacher-sharing session on dialogue journal writing in which the process was modeled: the participants began by writing their own entries and then responding to each other (minutes of this meeting are included in Appendix B). After this workshop, another intern introduced the idea to her students (minutes from the subsequent teacher-sharing meeting are also presented in Appendix B to show how the process developed).

Interns and students faced several hurdles in implementing the dialogue journals. The first of these was the issue of student-initiated topics: it was difficult to get the ball rolling with some classes. For example, one intern reported that at first students seemed to write short entries about what they did on the weekend ("I got up at 7:00. I went to church."). He addressed this problem by providing another time during class for them to write about their weekends; after this, they began to write about more interesting things during journal time. He then chose the most interesting entries and copied them for the class (with students' permission), which, in turn, prompted others to write more interesting journals. Other interns addressed the issue of generating interesting writing by suggesting topics for the initial journals; one, for example, asked students to write about what made it hard for them to come to class sometimes. Thus, the journals served the additional purpose of finding issues/problems in students' lives for further exploration.

Another issue, one that was initially raised by students, was the issue of what to do with journals once students had written in them - would they be corrected, put on the board, etc.? Students themselves often requested corrections and didn't see how they could be learning otherwise. For many of the interns, too, it was difficult at first to resist correcting journal entries. We dealt with this in a problem-posing way, with interns generating the following ways of responding to journals:

1. *Correct them:*
   - -rewrite them in correct form and return them to students
   - -put entries on the board and do group corrections
   - -correct specific mistakes in individual entries
   - -have students share their journals with each other and correct mistakes in pairs.

2. *Focus on issues from the journals for class discussion and literacy work:*
   - -find key words from the journals
   - -do problem-posing activities about the issues students wrote about
   - -use them as reading material

3. *Respond to individuals in terms of content only:*
   - -write a short note back which models correct spelling but focuses on what the student is saying.

Interns then went back to their classes and tried various approaches; as they saw students' responses, they increasingly steered away from corrections and focused on substantive responses. Marilyn translated the following journal sequence to show how both the quality and quantity of students' responses developed when she responded in this way.

Student :

Life is very*difficult*here.
Things are getting worse.
It is very hard to succeed.
We can not*do anything.
There is no*work, no work.

* mispelling

Teacher:

Things are very*difficult these days.
Every one is concerned by the same problem:
There is no*work.
What do you like to*do when you're not working?
Do you like watching T.V., do you like to go out, visit friends?

* correct spellino

--- words that student will use later.

Student:

My situation is very hard
Life is very difficult.
There is no*work.
Lots of people are walking with their arms crossed.
They don't have anything to do.
The children also are concerned,
They have more problems than the adults.
They can not go to school;
They can not eat as they should.
The adults can not pay their rent.
They become homeless.
They sleep on the streets.
The biggest problem is when you do not have money.

* correct spelling

--- teacher's words that student use with perfect spelling.

When I am not working
I stay home, do some housework,
And I go out looking for job.

We don't have to stay home doing anything,
Or living without doing anything because we are not working.
As for me, I go to church.
And I pray God every day.
I ask him to help me,
To give me hope
Because without him there's no hope
There is nothing we can do.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Letters: One of the main goals expressed by many students when they started classes was to be able to write letters to family and friends by themselves, without having to depend on others. The following describes how this process developed in the Spanish literacy component. After students had been in class for about five months, the teacher suggested the possibility of a letter-writing exchange with a Spanish literacy class in NYC. Students liked the idea of writing to others who shared the same experiences of becoming literate as adults, but weren't confident about their own ability to write real letters. After some reassurance, students chose letter-writing partners from a list with the names and nationalities of the students in the NYC class. Byron started them off by modeling how to write a letter with the whole class. For the next four days, they went through the following process:

1. Students wrote a first draft.
2. Interns copied it exactly as it was written and then, below it, wrote a corrected version. (The reason for this is that they didn't want to mark up the students copies.)
3. The teacher then typed up the corrected versions and gave them back to the class to read.
4. Students made further revisions.
5. Students copied the letters and sent them.

Although the exchange itself was sustained only for a few months, it gave students the confidence to begin writing letters to their families and friends. Byron describes this process in more detail, with examples of the letters, in his account of the development of the Spanish literacy component at Harborside (Chapter Five).

Magazine articles: Both the HMSC and the JMCS have had magazines of student writings for a number of years. At the JMCS, several of the interns were former students who had been on the editorial board of the magazine (called The Unruly Pen). In each case, the magazine was published several times a year and used in classes as a source of reading material. At the HMSC, there was a routine process for soliciting articles in which the teacher responsible for the magazine went to each class several weeks before the magazine was to be compiled and invited students to submit articles. Thus, at both sites, writing for the magazine was a regular part of ongoing activities. Being invited to write for the magazine turned out to be a strong motivation for literacy students. The changing participation of the Creole literacy classes in the magazine reflects the development both of the component and of the students' literacy proficiency. When the project began, the Master Teacher submitted an article that he had written about the Creole literacy component. In the subsequent issue, students wrote a class story (using the LEA method) which they submitted as a group. The next issue had a few short sentences written by literacy students. By the end of the project, each issue had numerous paragraph length submissions by Creole literacy students.

Photostories

A photostory is a story which is about a key issue or set of issues identified by learners accompanied by photographs. In our project, interns were introduced to the idea of photostories through Cathy Walsh's workshop. Marilyn St. Hilaire, an intern at the HMSC, decided to follow up on the idea with her own class, modeling the process on the methods described by Cathy, and the product on the South African photostory (Ndaba 1990). The following describes the steps in her process:

1. Picture plus analysis: Marilyn started by showing students a picture of a Haitian man looking pensive. She asked students to give their reactions to the picture: what did they see? They responded by saying they saw a man who is thinking and looking sad. Using a clustering format, she then asked why he might be sad and what he might be thinking. One student said he doesn't like the country where he lives. Others said he may have social problems: no money, no food, no family, prejudice/discrimination; he may have sentimental problems like a wife who cheats or whom he doesn't trust, problems with the educational system or prejudice. They then discussed the results of these problems, mentioning things like: frustration, loss of confidence, humiliation, alcoholism and drug problems. They went on to discuss possible solutions: go to school, be open about his problems, seek advice, etc.

2. Key words: Marilyn then pulled out some key words for syllable work and told the students that they would continue to discuss and write about the problems students had identified.

3. Further exploration and writing about themes generated: In subsequent classes (for about an hour each day), students discussed and wrote about various themes which had been identified in response to the picture: problems with their children's education, lack of respect and confidence, family problems, work. etc.

4. Writing their own photostory: Students then thougth about a story based on the earlier discussion. As Marilyn said, "The sad man came alive." They gave him a name and connected his various problems

5. South Africa book: Marilyn brought in a book written by South African literacy students as an example of something that they could do themselves with the story they had written.

6. Taking pictures: The students then assigned roles for the various characters and took pictures to go with each part of the story.

7. Lay-out and copying: The pictures were laid out with the story and copied.

8. Revision: There was some debate about the ending of the story when Marilyn showed it to her colleagues at the Center. The students then discussed the ending and revised it somewhat.

Putting it all together

Although each of the above tools has been presented separately, in reality, teachers generally integrated a number of tools around any given theme. They might, for example, combine using a photograph and key words with an LEA story and a published reading. In addition, these participatory tools were often integrated with traditional activities - grammar exercises in the ESL classes, handwriting or spelling work in the literacy classes. Further, many of the students requested math work and this was incorporated on a regular weekly basis in many of the classes. Finally, in the L1 literacy classes, as students became more confident with their first language reading and writing, they also requested some ESL instruction (the various processes for incorporating ESL into literacy classes are discussed below). Thus, any given week (about eight hours of classtime) might include a reading, key words, an LEA story, some individual student writing (eg. in dialogue journals), math work and ESL work. The nature of the activities and amount of time spent on each changed as students became more proficient. Bryon's chapter gives an account of how the curriculum developed and changed in the Spanish literacy component; he describes how various tools were integrated at different points in the process.

While early classes often emphasized traditional activities, as interns became more skilled in conscious listening and drawing out student themes, and students became more comfortable with the notion of centering learning around their concerns, a rich tapestry of themes and topics emerged. The following list gives a sense of the kinds of issues from the context of students' lives, around which curriculum was developed:

- *why L1 literacy is important
- *students' prior educational experiences
- *personal histories: reasons for immigrating, family situations
- *the calendar: students' birthdays, important historical events; the significance of holidays in learners' lives/cultures (Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Martin Luther King Day)
- *events in Haitian history
- *cultural phenomena (eg. mythical animals from Central American folklore)
- *current events: the Gulf War, Aristide's election, the coup against him, children from Haiti being forced to work in the Dominican Republic
- *issues of classroom dynamics: use of the L1 in ESL classes, students who were disruptive, dominating)
- *events in the local community: a Haitian cab driver being shot, someone being mugged, violence and safety
- *employment-related issues: workplace discrimination and other workplace problems; reasons for unemployment and strategies for finding jobs, employment in the home country
- *housing-related issues: homelessness, looking for an apartment
- *health-related issues: AIDS, nutrition
- *men's roles, women's roles

The transition from Native Language Literacy to ESL

While it would be nice to be able to report or project a single linear process and timetable for introducing ESL to L1 literacy students, our experience was that each group of students differed in terms of when and how the transition to ESL took place. Because students were involved in a participatory way in making decisions about starting ESL, the process varied both within and between classes. As mentioned earlier, this participatory decision-making began with dialogue about the rationale for Creole literacy. When students expressed resistance about Creole instruction at the HMSC, they were invited to try Creole literacy classes with time set aside for ESL, and then decide whether they wanted to continue or to switch to ESL only. In some cases, students chose to go directly to ESL classes, but then came back to the Creole literacy classes because they were more comfortable there. Some students chose to 'audit' beginning ESL classes while they were in Creole classes; some classes requested the teachers to include an hour a week of ESL right from the beginning. In most cases, once students began Creole classes, they saw their value and were enthusiastic about continuing in them. At the Harborside, students were asked at the beginning of the first cycle if they wanted one day a week of ESL conversation; they said that they wanted to begin by focusing exclusively on Spanish literacy and reconsider this question after three months.

At both sites, the question of when and how to incorporate English was an ongoing discussion, which was reintroduced periodically either by the students or the teacher. After three months, for example, the Harborside interns developed a code (translated into English below) to pose the issue back to students for further discussion; the students decided to wait another three months to begin ESL.

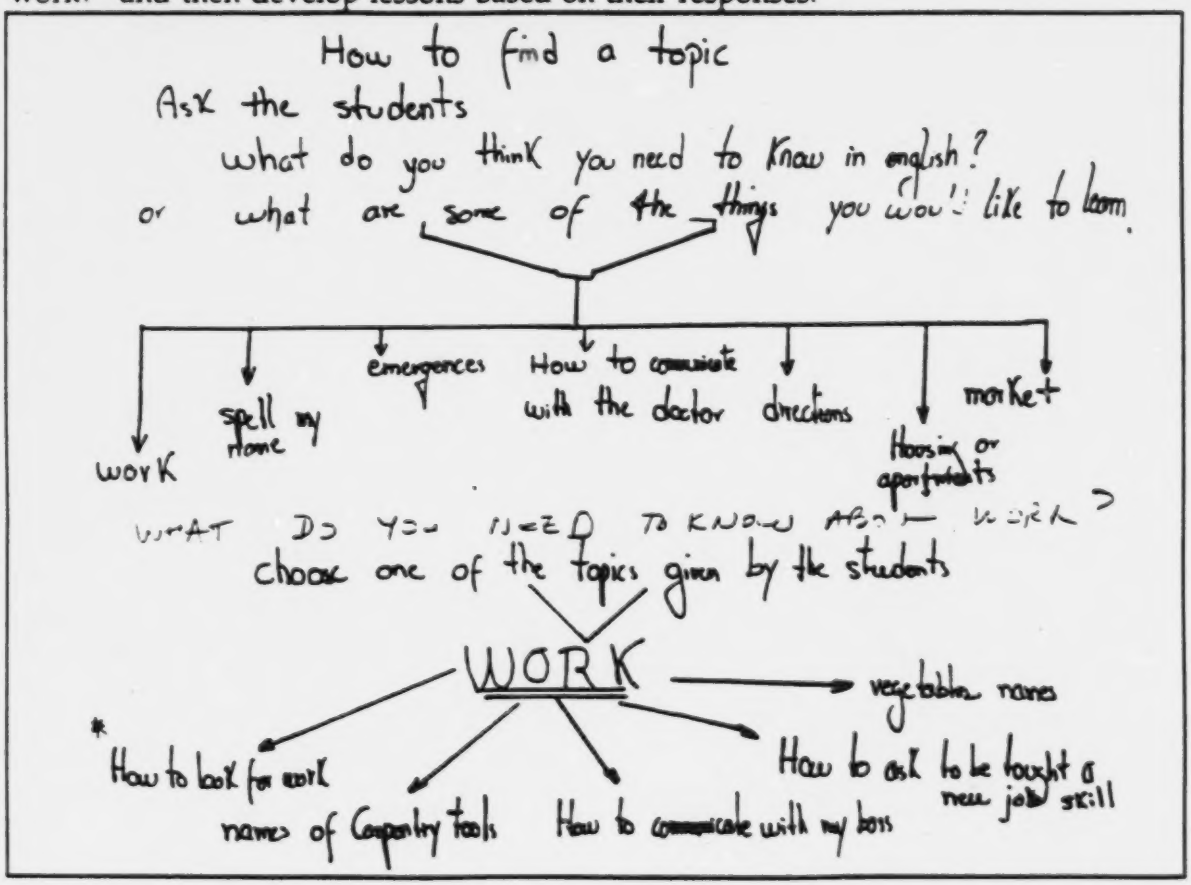
Teacher: Three months have passed since the beginning of the course. Do you think you feel ready to begin to learn English?
Maria: I do! I want to start studying English!
Alfredo: I think that I'm not ready yet because I still don't read and write well in Spanish, so I'll be more confused.
Miguel: I'll agree with whatever the majority decides.
Maria: I'm too weak to learn English.
Rosalia: I want to learn to read and write well in Spanish first.

Many factors shaped individual students' readiness and desire to begin ESL, including their prior educational experience, their ages, their exposure to ESL outside the class, their motivations for learning, and their self-confidence. Some students actually only wanted enough literacy to accomplish specific goals (eg. writing home, being able to read mail from home without help) and left classes once they had accomplished these goals. Others were afraid of starting English for various reasons. Still others wanted to start English before they had a solid basis in the L1. Thus, the process of deciding when and how to introduce ESL was a

negotiated one in which learners were provided with experiences in both languages, given a role in determining their own readiness, and provided with feedback from teachers.

Through this negotiation process, the model that evolved in virtually every site was one in which *the initial introduction to ESL took place within the original L1 literacy class and with the L1 literacy teacher.* After a start-up period of almost exclusive focus on L1 literacy (usually lasting 3 to 6 months), students designated a specific time each week to work on ESL. While the timing varied, this ESL instruction was usually circumscribed and confined to a particular period (eg. one night a week, one hour a week, or ten minutes a night); it was not randomly mixed in with L1 instruction. As such, the first encounter with ESL took place in a safe, familiar and supportive context.

The content of the initial exposure to ESL (as well as the timing and context of its introduction) were determined in a participatory way. Students were involved in selecting topics and vocabulary for what they needed to say in their everyday lives. Byron used a key word clustering technique to elicit topics. He started by asking "What do you need to know in English? What are some of the things you would like to learn?" He then invited students to choose one of the topics and brainstorm further; if the topic was work, he would ask "What do you need to know about work?" and then develop lessons based on their responses.


How to find a topic
Ask the students
what do you think you need to know in english?
or what are some of the things you would like to learn.
work
spell my name
emergences
How to communicate with the doctor
directions
Housing or apartments
market
WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WORK?
Choose one of the topics given by the students
WORK
vegetables names
How to look for work
names of Carpentry tools
How to communicate with my boss
How to ask to be taught a new job skill

Once students had decided what they wanted to learn, they generally began by focusing primarily on oral English and conversation about these topics. Writing was introduced either along the way (as a support to oral English) or afterwards, when students were comfortable with the oral version. Often, once students realized that writing would help them remember the English they were learning, they began to use it spontaneously. Byron reported, for example, that his students were apprehensive about starting ESL because of the writing; he proposed that they start with conversation only and they agreed. However, they soon began to insist that he write key vocabulary and phrases on the board at the end of each ESL conversation class so they could copy and practice them at home. Thus, they clearly saw their newly acquired literacy skills as a tool for ESL acquisition.

Julio tried to overcome students' fear of ESL in two ways. First, he always started with ESL words that they already knew - English words that had become 'Creolized.' In addition, he developed a specific way for students to draw on their knowledge of Creole literacy to support ESL acquisition: he elicited words in Creole that students would like to learn to say in English (what he called "survival vocabulary"- some of which are listed below). He then wrote the English word in Creole orthography (as aid for pronounciation and memory); the English spelling was presented next to the Creole version. Later, as students reported their successes with English, he stressed that the reason they were successful was because of their knowledge of Creole.

Creole	Creole orthography	English
legliz	tyètch	church
dimanch	sonnde	Sunday
lekol	skoul	school
travay	dyòb	job
ijans	emèjennsi	emergency

Even after ESL had become part of the class routine, its place within the context of L1 instruction continued to be an issue for negotiation, as the following excerpt from the HMSC teacher-sharing minutes shows.

> A student announced one day this week that he wanted to talk about how the class should be run: he did not want to work on English so much. Before Julio could respond, other students jumped in and told him not to talk on behalf of the class: he should speak for himself and they would express their own ideas. They said that they wanted English more than just once a week and shared their experiences about how they had begun to use the English they had learned in class: one student talked about being able to tell the boss that he didn't want to work overtime on Sundays ("Sunday - no work - church"); others talked about being able to call 911. They decided to work on English a little every day, learning a new word each day.

Even after students had been working on ESL within the context of a literacy class for some time, they were not always prepared for or comfortable with the idea of going into regular ESL classes (where students often had stronger L1 educational/ literacy backgrounds). At the HMSC, for example, some of the same students who had initially resisted Creole classes requested to stay in them (because of their sense of security or success) even when the teachers felt they were ready to move on. Thus, as a growing group of literacy students became more proficient, it became necessary to create a new kind of class - a transitional ESL class - to bridge the native language literacy and the regular ESL classes. These transitional classes provided a kind of sheltered ESL in which all the students came from literacy classes, shared the same language background and learned English bilingually.

The transition to this bilingual ESL class was also negotiated with individual students. When a teacher felt that a student was ready (based on a range of factors including literacy proficiency, self-confidence, preliminary basis in ESL vocabulary, ability to utilize L1 literacy to support ESL), he/she would let the student know. No single objective measure was used to determine ESL readiness; teachers said they generally knew when to move someone based on his/her participation in class, quality of ongoing written work, and reading performance: "when they become independent readers, can express their ideas in writing and can show how they think," as Marilyn said. If the student did not want to leave, the teacher would discuss the waiting list, the responsibility to make room for new students, and the kinds of support that the student would get in the new class; students would be encouraged to observe the ESL class, to move on a trial basis and to evaluate.

Thus, while it is not possible to specify a single timetable for moving from L1 literacy to ESL, there are some patterns which emerged in our project. Because new students enrolled each cycle, entered the program with different backgrounds, and developed at different rates, three levels could be identified: beginning L1 literacy students (still struggling with decoding and mechanical aspects of L1 literacy), advanced L1 literacy students (able to read and write meaningful sentences or paragraph level texts in their L1 and ready to begin applying their L1 literacy skills to the acquisition of English in a limited way) and transitional ESL students (ready to work primarily on ESL). At the HMSC, these three levels were evident almost from the beginning of the program; at Harborside, they became clearly differentiated after about six months. This range of levels created logistical problems: either different levels had to be accomodated within a single class (creating difficulties if there was only one teacher in the room) or new classes had to be set up (creating a structural strain in terms of space, staffing and funding). The conclusion from our experience was that, within six months of the time that a new group of literacy students begin, the levels and needs will diversify, requiring some structural changes. It is probably safe to say that there will be at least the three levels (beginning literacy, advanced literacy with add-on ESL, and transitional ESL students). Our experience suggests the following route to ESL for any given student or group:

- *concentrated focus on L1 literacy (often for about three to six months)
- *the limited introduction of ESL within the context of the L1 literacy class (after about six months)
- *transitional bilingual ESL in a special class for literacy students (often after about a year)
- *Beginning ESL ('mainstream' ESL)

Teaching Issues

As you may notice from the above accounts, many of the issues that teachers and interns encountered in working with students in the classroom were strikingly similar to the issues that arose in the training workshops: just as interns had started by expecting a methods-oriented training, students started by expecting a mechanical approach to literacy and a grammar-based approach to ESL; just as we struggled with different needs and starting points among interns, they struggled with a range of levels and tensions among students; just as we had to balance planning with responsiveness, interns had to find a similar balance in the classroom; just as we had to learn to integrate dialogue about theory with hands-on practical training, interns had to learn to integrate critical thinking and discussion with more mechanical aspects of instruction, and so on. This section highlights and summarizes the teaching issues touched on above and goes on examine how they were addressed.

Many of the initial issues centered around students' expectations of schooling and the transition to a participatory approach. Even if they hadn't been to school before, students often had an internalized notion of education that was quite traditional: school means sitting in rows, having a text book, doing exercises from worksheets, speaking only when called on, listening and copying, taking tests, etc. The teacher is the authority who tells the class what to do, transmits information, asks questions and knows all the answers, corrects students' errors, and enforces discipline. As interns and students became more comfortable with a model of learning which incorporated students' lives and concerns, the teaching issues changed, focusing more on how literacy and/or ESL could help to address learners' problems outside the class.

Where's the book?

As mentioned in the discussion of materials, a key issue was the desire of both interns and students for textbooks. However, most of those available, especially for L1 literacy, were not appropriate in terms of content or level: they were often geared toward a non-U.S. context, were too overtly political or too mechanical, too elementary or too advanced. Although interns developed ways to integrate existing texts with other tools, they continued to feel the need for good L1 literacy texts.

You're the teacher.... you're supposed to tell us what to do.

With a student-centered rather than text-centered curriculum, one of the early problems that interns struggled with was how to find students' concerns. On the one hand, they didn't always know how to draw students out: they sometimes would ask students directly what they wanted to do in class and get no response. On the other, students were initially uncomfortable with the idea of helping to select topics: they felt that a good teacher should know what to do without asking. As interns developed more structured ways of eliciting themes and issues, students became more comfortable about contributing their ideas and experiences.

Let's stop talking and do our work.

Once interns became more comfortable eliciting discussion and integrating it into class time, a new issue arose, namely, that students didn't always see this as legitimate learning. While in ESL classes, discussion about real student concerns was seen as oral English or conversation practice, in literacy classes students sometimes felt that open-ended discussion was not 'real work.' It was seen as a diversion from the lesson, rather than part of the lesson. Once interns learned to connect discussion with more structured learning activities (LEA stories, grammar work or student writing), students began to see it as a framework for learning.

What's the right answer?

A related issue about the dynamics of dialogue in the classroom concerns students' notions of what counts as 'real' knowledge. Often students didn't see their own knowledge or opinions as valid; they saw the teacher as the source of knowledge and their task as getting the 'correct' answer to teachers' questions. Romeo's students, for example, went through a period when each one would repeat what he or another student said when asked their views in a discussion. Some students were uncomfortable with the idea of disagreeing, or debating ideas; many had come from cultures and/or political contexts where they hadn't had experience with dialogue or where it may even be dangerous to disagree with an authority figure, to state one's true beliefs. Interns and students alike had to go through a process of learning that it was fine to share opinions and even to disagree.

Let's get back to the lesson plan.

The dilemma of sticking with the plan vs. going with the flow was a tension for some interns. The two extremes of this tension were having no plan (waiting for a lesson to emerge spontaneously) and sticking to a plan rigidly without allowing for the lesson to take its own direction. In order to insure coherence, some interns decided to set a schedule for a whole week in advance (or to follow the same schedule each week, reading on Monday, writing on Tuesdays, etc.); however, by the end of the first day, they would realize that the plan for the next day wouldn't work. Once interns were familiar with a set of tools which could be utilized flexibly in response to spontaneous discussion, they were able to modify plans as needed.

Why didn't you correct my mistakes? I want to study grammar.

One of the inherent contradictions in a participatory approach is, on the one hand, the goal of involving students in decision-making and, on the other, introducing non-traditional approaches. Interns faced the dilemma of what to do if, through a participatory process, students decide they want to focus on mechanical decoding, grammar or corrections. Interns often handled this by combining traditional and innovative approaches, showing students their progress through each approach, and negotiating how to proceed.

I need to have three eyes.

The differences in levels, needs and wants within a given class create an inevitable dilemma. The result may be a tension between students, as in the case of Ana's class where the more advanced students wanted Ana to give a test to screen out lower level students, and the case of Julio's class where some students wanted ESL every day while others wanted it once a week. Often interns prepared separate activities for different groups, trying to keep everyone occupied while they worked with sub-groups and, as Marilyn said, making teachers feel that they needed to have three eyes to keep track of it all. Other strategies included developing peer teaching activities, getting tutors, and doing group activities which incorporated a range of student strengths (some students speaking, others writing, etc.).

We don't have Indians.

Further, tensions may arise between students because of historic differences between ethnic or nationality groups, differences in belief systems or even religious differences. This kind of tension arose in one of Byron's classes when he was discussing Indian words in Spanish: while in Guatemala (where Byron is from), there is a great deal of appreciation for and pride in Indian culture (with traditions and customs having been preserved), in El Salvador (where many of students were from) the Indian culture hasn't been preserved and Indians have been assimiliated. So when Byron began to talk about Indian word origins, some of these students were offended and tried to dissociate themselves, saying, "We don't have Indians in El Salvador." At the HMSC, there were sometimes tensions between students from different religious groups, particularly when one tried to assert his/her views. These tensions were addressed in various ways: sometimes interns tried to avoid them or request that they not be discussed in class; sometimes, the class explored them from a historical perspective; sometimes, they were addressed through cultural sharing.

Tell him to be quiet. Tell her not to bring her children to class.

Other classroom dynamics problems relate not just to differences in levels or beliefs, but to personality and situational conflicts, as in the cases of students bringing their children to class or students who talk too much. While students initially expected the teachers to intervene to fix the situation, many of the teachers in our project moved toward addressing these issues in a problem-posing way, by presenting problems back to the class which then collectively generated ways to address them.

If we wanted to learn about guerillas we would have stayed in El Salvador.

An additional dilemma concerned how to implement a Freirean notion of connecting literacy work with the social/political context of students' lives. Students often explicitly resisted political discussions when they were initiated by teachers; however, over and over, our experience was that they became very animated and engaged when discussion of the same issues emerged spontaneously

or in the context of skills work. Likewise, when a teacher imposed his/her views about a topic (eg. the elections in Haiti), students either were silenced or overtly resisted. As Julio said, as a teacher, it's important not to impose your views because students think they have to agree with you because you're the teacher. Further, once interns came to understand politics as manifesting itself in everyday life (rather than just through wars, elections, etc.), it was easier to integrate analysis into teaching.

I can't concentrate. I'm too distracted.

Often students come to class preoccupied with worries that seemed to block their participation. While initially interns sometimes tried to get students to leave their problems outside the classroom door (telling them to concentrate, to stop talking about things unrelated to the lesson), they became increasingly more skilled at integraing these concerns into the lessons and even inviting students to bring out problems in class. They did this by asking questions like: What makes it hard for you to come to class? What makes it hard for you to concentrate? From these questions, they did writing assignments, LEA stories, etc. At the HMSC, for example, all the interns stressed the importance of spending class time dealing with students' feelings about the coup against Aristide as an integral part of instruction.

How can we deal with their problems? They're too overwhelming.

Once the door was open for students to bring their own concerns and issues into class, a new problem arose: the teachers themselves at times felt overwhelmed by the students' problems. The problems seemed so big that they didn't know how to approach them. For example, at the HMSC, students were constantly preoccupied with finding jobs and with basic issues of surviving the recession. On the one hand, students were distracted from classwork by these concerns, but on the other, focusing on the problems only seemed to make everyone more depressed. Just providing space to discuss these problems seemed to help; further, some teachers brought in concrete activities related to the problems (lessons on finding jobs, fighting discrimination in the workplace, etc.) combined with some analysis of the broader context (causes of recession, unemployment, etc.).

How we addressed teaching issues

Just as the teaching issues themselves mirrored training issues, ways of addressing them paralleled ways of addressing training issues. Interns worked through many of the same processes with each other and with students that we had worked through to resolve problems that arose in training. As such, our ways of dealing with training issues in the workshops modeled ways that they could address classroom-based teaching issues. These strategies included: combining traditional and innovative approaches, linking dialogue with concrete, structured activities, reflecting on ways of learning (metacognition), drawing on the resources of the group (through teacher-sharing and peer teaching), and problem-posing.

The primary strategy for dealing with students' expectations for traditional activities, materials, and student-teacher roles, was to integrate the more traditional and mechanical format (grammar, workbook, dicatation) with more participatory activities. Likewise, a key way of legitimating dialogue, learners' knowledge and critical thinking was to link discussion with structured literacy/ESL activities.

> In one of the beginning ESL classes at the HMSC, students saw a video about Aristide's inauguration. When one of the interns asked students how they felt about it, answers were very short and formal ("I liked it"). When the intern asked much more concrete and specific questions (about what they saw in the video, their reactions to specific parts of it and how it related to their lives, whether they wanted to go back and why), they became much more engaged. This focused discussion was then followed by a group story, key words, and individual stories. On a subsequent day, when the teacher came back with student sentences about the video, someone said she didn't want to do any more about politics - she was sick of it; however, when the teacher suggested correcting the sentences, students liked the idea. Eugenie, who had been participating, noted that *students seemed less engaged when the discussion was general and loose, but when it was concrete, linked to students' real experiences and to mechanical language work (writing, doing corrections), they loved it and this work prompted them to start talking about the issues again.*

Often when teachers tried a new activity, they would integrate discussion about why they were doing it and invite students to compare their own responses to more traditional vs. innovative activities. This kind of ongoing evaluation and meta-talk about learning strategies was instrumental in legitimating the new approaches.

> Many of the students wanted teachers to correct their spelling and grammar in dialogue journals. They felt that otherwise they wouldn't learn anything. Marilyn explained the rationale for responding rather than correcting, saying she would take problem areas from the journals for mini-lessons. Later, she took excerpts from the journals to show students how the quantity and quality of the writing had improved (longer pieces and more complex ideas, as well as improved spelling) through the response method.

The primary strategy interns used when dealing with issues of classroom dynamics was first to bring the issue back to their site-based group, drawing on each other's resources and expertise to address problem, and then to go back to the classroom and try something inspired by the teacher-sharing discussion.

An issue that came up at the HMSC was the role of the teacher in terms of authority and control in relation to problems with students. In some classes, there have been times when certain students were participating in a way that caused tension for others. At a teacher-sharing meeting, everyone discussed how they handle these problems: some teachers made rules for students and asked them to leave if they broke the rules; others gave the problem back to students, either by asking their opinion directly or by making a code or lesson that approached the issue indirectly. The teachers then went on to discuss how the various perceptions of teachers' roles reflected culturally-shaped ways of interacting and how they also reflect political perspectives. The discussion turned to how the classroom dynamics are similar to political dynamics outside the classroom. Finally, each of the interns decided to go back to his/her classroom and try an approach different from his/her usual way of handling problems.

In addition, interns often chose to address problems of classroom dynamics by creating a problem-posing code about the issue as a framework for both language/literacy work and a way of involving students in the resolution of the problem. Examples are the code about use of the native language in the ESL classroom developed by Jackson-Mann interns (p. 95) and the code about students who talk too much used by an HMSC intern (p. 73).

This approach of involving students in addressing classroom problems was probably the most effective strategy that interns used, since it moved the class toward sharing responsibility for learning. Further, the underlying principle of the project - drawing on the resources of the community to address community needs - was reinforced as students worked together.

Ana decided to investigate why attendance had been uneven at one point. Some students said they thought it was because the levels are so mixed. The ones with stronger educational backgrounds suggested giving a test to see who is not ready for this level and moving them to a lower level. Others weren't comfortable with this, so they decided to do a less formal mid-semester review and evaluation. Ana prepared a format with specific and direct questions about each of the three topics they had been working on. Students worked in small groups, responding as though it were a regular class instead of a test or evaluation. There was more participation and discussion than usual; students loved the class. Everyone said what they could and this allowed the teachers to see what people had learned, what they had difficulty with. This, in turn, informed subsequent classes.

At another point, an intern decided to try pairing higher and lower level students in a mixed level JMCS class. The interaction was so successful that the advanced student announced she didn't want to move to a higher level because, as she said to the intern, "You need me." Similarly, in East Boston, after about six months in the program, the more advanced Spanish literacy students decided to work in the beginners' classes one day a week to tutor them.

Thus, while the process was uneven, and varied from intern to intern, overall interns came to rely on their collective resources, rather than 'university experts', to address classroom issues, adopting a stance of inquiry, posing problems back to students, and negotiating solutions with them.

Estelita teaching her class

Ediane with her students

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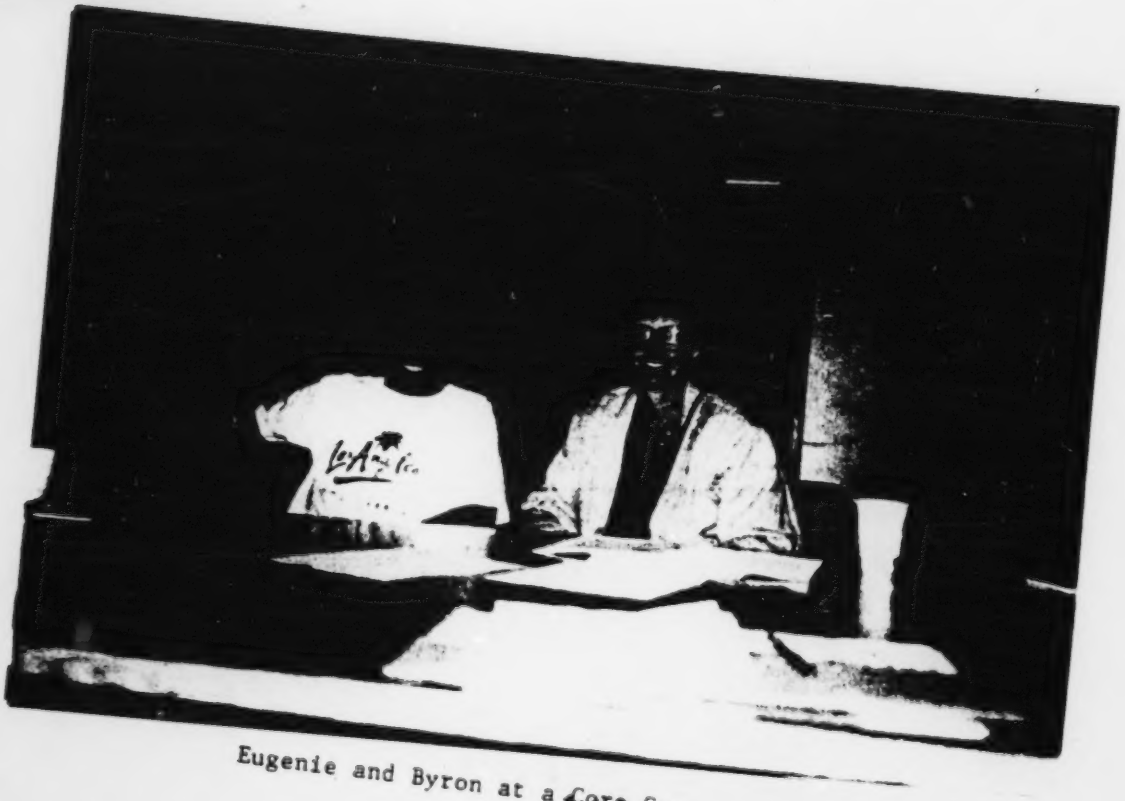
Interns

Laudize and Kerline



Eugenie and Byron at a [illegible] Group meeting

Chapter Five: The Spanish Literacy Component

By Byron Barahona, Master Teacher
Harborside Community Center

THE NEED

The Spanish Literacy project at Harborside Community Center knew its early development in the fall of 1990 as a result of being part of a Title VII-funded collaboration with UMass and two other adult education agencies. Prior to this funding there had been some native language instruction. However, it was extremely limited because students who needed this type of instruction were part of the amnesty program whose main purpose was to teach ESL/civics . Students came in order to fulfill a requirement to become permanent residents of the U.S. Classes were functioning to their fullest capacity, 25 to 30 students per class. In the beginning students came to this program for only three months and then later for only 7 weeks. Thus, in addition to not being adequately served, students who had limited literacy skills could only stay for a short period of time in that program.

Moreover, classes were multi-level and multi-lingual, though the majority of students were Spanish and Portuguese speaking. It was difficult to give proper instruction to those students (mostly Spanish speaking) who had limited literacy skills in their native language. The situation was remedied by giving them some Spanish literacy tutoring before or during classtime.

The necessity for native language literacy instruction resulted from the fact that the ESL/civics students were not the only ones who could benefit from more native language literacy instruction. Regular ESL classes also experienced retention problems due to students having low or limited literacy skills in their mother tongue.

All this is to say that, Harborside had many reasons for seeking funding to establish native language literacy instruction for underserved Spanish speaking students.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE PRAXIS

The goal of this project was to provide appropiate instruction to those who had been, in one form or another, denied access to what many consider an entitlement: education. It must also be noted the instructional approach to be used to reach this goal had already been decided by the project at the time Harborside decided to participate in it. The approach would be a Freirean or a participatory approach. Even though this instructional approach was already articulated by the project, it coincided with the Center's and my own pedagogical orientation to teaching and learning.

The following are some of the ideas that I found informative and illuminating in order to implement the Freirean approach. First, Paulo Freire articulates an educational theory which is concerned with liberating individuals from forces that deny their humanity. However, in this particular process, what I found innovative is the fact that it is not about some individuals liberating others. For Freire, the crucial step is for the

oppressed to become aware of his/her dehumanized state of being. For, in order to change an oppressive reality, one must be aware of it to later attempt to transform it.

Further, another influential idea is Freire's view of Dialogue in Education. For Freire, Dialogue is at the core of any real and true transformation of any educational program that attempts to 'educate' the oppressed. It is through Dialogue, as it will be described further down, that teachers discover students' concerns and issues.

Moreover, in*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Freire proposes a model of education called Problem Posing Education. This model aims at guiding individuals towards thinking critically about their own reality and reflecting upon it. Therefore, he proposes a total questioning of the existing educational structure. In his view, current educational systems usually manifest only the views and prejudices of the oppressors, whose purpose is to domesticate individuals by training them to perform and perpetuate an oppresive system. In Problem-Posing education, social and educational change are essential for any type of transformation. The latter was particularly influential, for it could be applied to the reality of marginalized immigrants in this country. The way these ideas were applied to our particular context will be explained in more detail in the following sections.

THE PROJECT: IMPLENTATION OF FREIRAN APPROACH

One of the ideas that Freire strongly articulates in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is the necessity of investigating the area where teachers or coordinators are going to work. However, this notion mainly addresses massive literacy campaigns as they take place in Latin America or in other parts of the world. In our particular context, since classes met at a school located in the area where the students or learners live, teachers did not have to come to investigate the area. It was assumed that we were already familiar with the issues relevant to the people that we would teach and learn from.

This assumption was based on key information about the students, teachers, and interns who participated in this project; i.e. the fact that both teachers-interns and students come from similar cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the situation in which I and other teachers have been immersed is very different to the one Freire describes. While in Brazil, the dominant social group and the marginalized literacy learners come mainly from a homogeneous linguistic and cultural background, the community of people we worked with is located within a linguistically and culturally diverse society. This fact, raises new difficulties. Since the students in this project are not literate in their native language, linguistic barriers limit the possibilities for teachers speaking only English to be directly involved in the teaching-learning process. Hence, it was essential to find teachers or interns who had cultural and linguistic bonds with the students to be involved in the process. This matter reinforces the importance of including teachers from the community of the learners, for they may be in a better position to understand the learners' reality.

Indeed, given this cultural and linguistic commonality, one might infer that teachers understand the reality of the students. However, the danger with this assumption is that it may not always be true. Since most of the literacy students at Harborside come from rural areas in their countries, social class distinctions and rural or urban backgrounds play an important role. As a result, the process of selecting teachers becomes more complex, for

there is a dual reality at work: the reality were the students come from and the reality in which they might be immersed in actuality.

In conclusion, teacher or interns cannot be assumed to understand the totality of the participants' reality, both in this country (the U.S.) and their own. It is not sufficient to have teachers or interns involved in the process solely based on cultural and linguistic bonds, but they must also be individuals who are willing to struggle with the learners along the process of learning, as well as to engage in co-investigation as part of the instructional process. For the danger, as Freire points out, is that coordinators may adopt a paternalistic attitude.

Once this problem has been tentatively addressed before the proccess begins, and assuming that teachers or interns are conscious of the area in which the students live, then the process can get started. Freire proposes guidelines that could be utilized to investigate the conditions of the area where one is to work. For example: a) investigators should meet and discuss with the participants their objectives in the area; b) investigators should make clear that mutual understanding and trust is necessary; c) investigators should call for volunteers or assistants who investigate - gather a series of necessary data about the life of the area; d) investigators may not impose their preception on the reality they are facing, much less to transform it; e) investigators should consider the area of study as a totality and then proceed to decode it in order to understand every part of its totality through observation and informal conversation with the inhabitants, etc.

It is clear that our realities are very different, so the classroom has been the medium to investigate the issues listed above, for instance, the way people talk, lifestyle, their idiom *(expressions, vocabulary, syntax, the way they construct their thoughts)*. Accordingly, the classroom becomes both the place for dialogue and the research area of all those aspects.

TEACHER-STUDENT ENCOUNTER

The first day of class, interns and I started with a small group of seven adult participants from El Salvador. We tried to get to know the participants by discussing the purpose of the project and making clear that *'mutual understanding and trust was necessary'*. Then, we asked them about their previous experience at school - if they had one - and only if they felt comfortable talking about it. At first, they seemed hesitant about saying anything, but once the first participant started, the rest followed. Through this conversation, we found out that some of them had not gone to school at all, others went to school one year when they were children, and others had had a recent experience which did not last very long.

Students talked about different reasons for not going to school such as: "We were so poor that our parents needed us to work in the fields since we were children, so there was no time to go to school. When we could go to school we had to walk kilometers to get there and that made our going to school more difficult". The reasons they gave us were known to us in one way or another, so we were particularly intrigued about their most recent experience here in the Boston area and asked why it had ended so soon. This was their response: "We did not feel like we were learning anything. The instructor would show us pictures about the war in El Salvador for the most part. We left El Salvador because of the horrors of the war or because of economic hardship". One student said, "if I wanted to know more about the guerilla, I would have stayed in El Salvador and become one, it was so easy to

do it". They proceeded, "We are here and don't want to know much about it. We went to that school because we wanted to learn to read and write in Spanish, but instead of doing that we felt that the teacher only wanted to discuss the war between the goverment and the guerilla and the reasons the guerilla had to fight the military forces. We thought we were wasting our time".

The way this was told was an indication that something wrong had been going on, so we tried to establish as much dialogical interaction as possible in order not to dissapoint them while we proceeded to implement our ideas.

In relation to the experience they described, my immediate impression was that perhaps the former instructor had tried to use some of Freire's ideas but was not taking students' input into account in using them. It is true that Freire suggests to use codifications in the classroom, but when they are not used adequately and are not connected to students' life contents, issues, and what they wanted to learn; it falls into what Freire calls "*brain-washing propaganda*" (pp. 107, 1971), regardless of whatever good intentions the teacher may have.

The pictures the former instructor used might have been overly explicit and might have not offered possibilities of interpretation,, as well. Furthermore, they might have not been connected to learning how to read and write. However, since I did not witness the classroom situation the students were describing, I can only infer - with the danger of not doing justice to the former instructor - what might have happened.

INIITIAL GENERATIVE WORDS

After this discussion, we also talked about the types of work they do now and what they used to do in their country. A lot of data was collected from these conversations. The men had been, for the most part, fishermen and others, including women, had worked in the fields growing different vegetables (such as corn, tomatoes, etc.). The language or 'idiom' they used to describe their fishing activities was unique. There were words that we had never heard. Many of those words referred to the same objects they used to use for fishing. They explained what they were and that information was carefully registered because we were going to use it later.

From the very first day the classroom became both the center for learning and the site to gather-investigate available data about the students' lives. There we found out that one of the main reasons why they wanted to learn how to write and read was to be able to write letters to their families, relatives and friends. So far they had been recording cassettes to communicate with their families in El Salvador. We also discovered that it is a common practice among illiterate individuals; otherwise they have to ask someone to either read or write a letter for them. They did not seem very happy about having to depend on someone else. In one of the students' own words, "*having to ask someone to read or write a letter for us means having to disclose our private life to others; sometimes this is very frustrating. There are things others do not need to know*" (excerpt from a conversation with Carlos G. Spanish Literacy I).

In the beginning we also wanted to have an idea of how much they knew. In order to find out, we wrote all the letters of the alphabet on the board and asked if they recognized some of them. The result was that some students did in fact know some letters but no more than seven or eight and others knew two or three. This was an indication that it was going to be quite a

challenging experience, for we would have had to start with very basic excercises to loosen up their hands by making horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines and circles. This, of course, was primarily an excercise to be done at home, so we could use the classroom time to develop other activities.

In subsequent days, codifications were introduced. Since we knew all of them were familiar or directly involved with fishing activities in the past and to some extent currently, a codification was introduced in order to elicit themes of conversation. This codification represented a man fishing with rudimentary equipment. Just as we had anticipated, a lively discussion emerged. In it, we discussed quite a variety of themes related to fishing - from the different methods used; the kinds of fish found in rivers, ponds, and sea; life at sea while fishing for long periods of time; to a comparison of the way fishing is done in this country both commercially and as a hobby. We not only learned a great deal about fishing but also found out how involved the students became once issues related to their lives were brought up. Everyone had something to say. The language they used was uniquely exquisite and unfamiliar to our ears. Their expressions, vocabulary, syntax and the way they constructed their thoughts were a continuous delight to listen to but, most importantly, all those aspects of their way of expressing themselves were recorded for future references and class material. The curriculum was there. We did not have to make one, but guide it. They were making it. They were, we could say, without realizing it at first, co-investigators in the learning process.

The duration of discussions depends on two factors primarily: 1) how well the issue has been introduced; 2) how appealing the issue is to the students; and their consequent interest and motivation to discuss it. In relation to the fishing example, the discussion developed almost throughout the entire classtime. Now our role as teachers was to connect it with learning mechanical aspects of literacy. Since it is important to start with words that relate to a theme that appeals to the students, we did not bother studying the alphabet in the order known to everyone. Instead, we chose a key word; in this case, it was the word "*pesca = fishing*" which we proceeded to decode or break into syllables. Then we started to form every single syllable with the first consonant of the word "pesca" in combination with the vowels; and then the second one, but concentrating at this point mainly in the first one in order not to overwhelm the students.

At a different day we would study the second consonant in combination with vowels as well. So far it was sufficient to become familiar with the different sounds of "p" with "a,e,i,o,u" and words that might result from the combination of the syllables. We also wrote on the board all the words related to fishing that they used. The purpose was, first to show the participants how oral expression can be translated into written expression; second, to come back to those words at a proper moment when other letters found in them would have been introduced; and third, to use those words months later when students could read them and see by themselves how much they would have progressed at that point from the first time when they could not read them.

The list of examples could be very extensive. What is important to note from the above case is that anything students might say about their lives and their interests could potentially become the themes and generative words to be used as a tool to develop their literacy skills and elicit discussions.

FINDING TOPICS AND DIALOGUES

As it has been pointed out, the classroom was both the field of research and the center of learning. Hearing the students complain about their living conditions was an indication that we needed to develop class material around housing issues and tenants' rights. Likewise, hearing them complain about their working conditions was another indication that we needed to develop class material around worker's rights and discrimination.

Furthermore, we still had to deal with the issue of politics in the classroom since that is a very important element in the problem posing education model. Given that students had had a bad experience in the past with discussing political issues in the classroom, the key was to expand the notion of politics and apply it to realms that were not often thought of as having a political dimension. In addition, in many circumstances, when we discussed political issues, the word 'politics' was not even mentioned.

Because students did not seem interested in discussing the politics of their country, for the sake of not repeating the same experience they had previously had, we decided to put this issue on hold while we studied other possibilities to approach it. In the meantime, we worked on more immediate problems that involved politics. For instance, discrimination, workers' rights, legalization process, underpaid salaries, exploitation, tenant's rights, etc. All these issues had a tremendous richness in them to exhaust in the classroom. Very often many of them were intertwined as we will see below.

The following example took place eight months after we had started this class. At this point students had considerably progressed in their reading skills - with some difficulties, of course, but manageable. For this reason, the excercise was adequate for their level of reading and writing.

In order to carry on many of our tasks, we tried to utilize the resources available in the area by attempting to connect them with students' concerns and learning mechanical aspects of literacy as well. This rationale being at the core of our praxis, we contacted an organization whose goal is to advocate and assist immigrant workers concerning their rights in the workplace, from getting the minimum wage that the law stipulates to lawsuits in cases of poor working conditions, etc. As a part of its goals the organization translated a whole literature concerning workers' rights which was used in this particular situation.

First, the decision to do this lesson was made based on hearing students complain about certain factories that had not paid them for their labor or overtime, etc. In this situation, the student knew that something was not right, but could not react due to lack of knowledge of their rights and where to go for advocacy. Accordingly, we gave students a handout that explained workers' rights. This handout was divided into sections, so each day during one week we concentrated in one specific section. These sections evolved mainly around the following issues: Workplace rights, Benefits and Compensation, Unions and Unemployment.

Next, each section was divided into three components in the following order: reading, discussing and writing. During the reading component students took about forty minutes to read the material. In it, the organization explains their goal and then explains the rights workers have such as miminum wage, overtime regulations, working conditions, sick time, etc.. These readings were done both individually and collectively. For instance, because the language in the worker's rights handout was often too technical and complicated, groups of three students concentrated on one specific section. Then, they discussed the content and attempted to

understand it. After students in a given group had reached an agreement about the content of their respective section, they explained it to the rest of the class. Once the students finished reading this document, the class as a whole also dealt with the technical language and explained some unclear points. In this situation, it was either me or any other student who explained whatever needed to be clarified. In some cases there were questions that remained unanswered but were addressed when representatives of the organization came to follow up on these issues.

The second component evolved around a discussion of the material previously read. While we were trying to understand the law, I asked the students if they had been in a situation were their rights had been violated. Not surprisingly, all of them had been discriminated against, exploited or not paid at all. Given this situation, we proceeded to talk about their experience and tried to figure out in what ways knowing the law and, most important, the existence of the organization could have helped to prevent such violations from happening or counteract them while taking place. In principle, the students were happy and enthusiastic to find out that they had certain rights, and especially to come to know them by themselves, i.e., by directly being involved in reading about their rights while they developed their literacy skills.

Without having directly talked about the political implications of this issue, it was obvious for them that it was the struggle between one class exploiting another. But the latter is not all; it is also a struggle between parts of the dominant Anglo society exploiting other racial groups. This situation is not any different to the one they experience in their native country where the oligarchy exploits the lower classes. They certainly know that. However, this connection was automatically made by the students themselves. In Freire' terms, awareness of their current reality is essential for its transformation.

Our last component was writing and in order to accomplish it, students were given an assignment in which they had to respond in writing to questions such as, "In your own experience, when did you feel your rights had been violated, and how would the law protect you in such situations?"

In response to the question students said the following:

"There were days when I got sick and I did not get pay for them."
"I was pressured to work very hard for very little pay."
"I did not get pay for overtime.", etc.

When asked how we could solve those problems students responded:

"by consulting a lawyer"
"by talking to someone who knows more about these things"
"by consulting the organization in order to help us and clarify some of the laws that protect us.," etc.

In this manner, all aspects such as their own experience, reading, and writing were emphasized to develop their mechanical skills, awareness of their own reality, and critical reflection upon it.

After having read, discussed and written about workers' rights, this activity was followed up by a workshop a week later. This workshop was given by the organization mentioned above. In these workshops, two presenters explained what we had read and then asked the students for specific examples to illustrate better how the law could be applied. This was a success because having read the literature in advance, the students had

thought about it, and therefore had many questions to ask. The presenters also provided a specific example of a lawsuit in progress for workers that had not been paid for several weeks and who had also been working under dangerous conditions at a factory of chemical products.

I think that, after this activity, students became aware of other dimensions of working in this country which they would normally disregard or simply did not have access to due to the language barrier.

Moreover, it was interesting to find out from the students that although they knew they had been underpaid, some of them accepted it. The justification they provided was the fact that they are not U.S. citizens, and having a working permit did not seem to make a difference. Somehow they had this notion that their status, i.e., not being citizens, did not entitle them to seek equality in the workplace. If there is a lesson to learn from this unit, it was that we all deserve equal treatment in the workplace regardless of our status in this country, for there should not be hierarchies built around jobs based on race or nationality. To deny workplace equality to immigrants is to negate part of our humanity and, hence, the dichotomy between oppressors-oppressed gets perpetuated.

In this regard, dialogue was important because through it we found out what specific problems the students have had in the workplace. Once that information had been acquired, our task was to find a way to make it a learning experience and also provide the guidance to work on the liberatory process, i.e. bringing in the literature about workplace rights and discussing it with the students. Students certainly knew when something was not right at the workplace, which proves that marginalized groups often know their reality very well but often do not know how to transform it. In addition, it was a process in which we all inquired and discovered how we might possibly transform an alienating situation. For knowing the law is not always a guarantee of justice. For instance, presenters from the organization previously mentioned gave examples of collective action and organizing. They emphasized how important and determinant workers' involvement and organizing was at the factory of chemical products by bringing to jurisprudence's attention the injustices and conditions they faced. In the end, solidarity among workers was a key element to make their voices heard.

DIFFICULTIES

Although most of the attempts to implement this approach using generative themes connected with literacy learning were succesful, there were situations in which it did not happen as expected, but not always necessarily because the method itself has inadequacies.

The problem stems from a series of factors that affect the classroom significantly and thus need to be taken into consideration. First, most students in our program worked long hours and consequently were exhausted by the end of the day. Our classes unfortunately suffered from being held in the evenings. The second factor involves more directly issues related to the approach. Students may not always want to be involved in discussions out of codifications and generative themes. For this reason, one must strive for a combination of activities to create a balance between discussions that lead to critical reflection and activitivies that lead to literacy acquisition. It is difficult and challenging to create this balance, but by no means impossible (see examples in *Finding Topics* and *Dialogues*).

In addition, the implementation of the participatory approach mainly requires teachers' creativity and students' participation. Initially, some of the difficulties we faced had to do with students' resistance to the approach. For example, students did not always feel that they were learning anything by discussing issues or themes. Second, since the approach strives for building a curriculum that evolves around students' issues, there were times when they did not feel comfortable to talk about certain aspects of their lives. Instead they preferred to concentrate heavily on developing their mechanical skills, i.e., working on syllabic structures without necessarily analyzing the word and its loaded meaning first. In other words, a lot of times students wanted the teacher to deliver the information they needed in the banking model of teaching. We had the knowledge they wanted, and therefore they wanted us to deliver it. They wanted to learn how to write and read without going through the process of thinking why and how written language is related to issues of their every day life.

In terms of teacher's creativity, we had to deal with the fact that there are literally few Spanish literacy resources available to develop a curriculum. It is true that if we are to take students issues and concerns to develop a curriculum, we could infer that we have enough resources. However, this requires a tremendous amount of effort to creativily utilize students issues while developing the curriculum. Thus, every day becomes a challenging experience which is positive to some extent, but it can also be overwhelming for both the teacher and the students. For a given teacher does not always have all the solutions for all the problems that arise in literacy teaching. It is then important to have other resourses available for the sake of serving students adequately.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

Students' Writings and Themes

While these themes were being explored and reading activities being developed, the literacy also began to work on writing. Students writing developed very slowly because students knew very few letters or none at the beginning of the program. The primary challenge at first was to develop very basic literacy skills such as how to loosen up their hands in order to be able to write letters. Students had first to do elemental exercices such as horizontal, vertical lines and circles. At the same time, it was important to keep their motivation very high so the students could experience positive outcomes.

As classes progressed and only after having done very elemental excercises, the move to introducing the first letters was our next step. We gradually started to form small words with the letters known to the students.

To expand the dimensions of the approach we found it appropiate, for instance, to talk about St. Valentine's Day in February. In Spanish it is also called the day of Affection: Día del cariño. We discussed what this day meant for some people and the ways it is celebrated. Since, this happened two weeks after we had started the program and students were not yet used to our approach, they seemed puzzled about why we were talking about this day. Being St. Valentine's day was probably not enough justification for having this discussion, for they were there to learn technical skills instead. Later the word was written on the board and broken into syllables to then encourage the students to form new words by combining the syllables:

Cariño
ca - ri - ñ o
....
....
....
ca-ce-ci-co-cu *ra-re-ri-ro-ru* *ña-ñe-ñi-ño-ñi*
cuco *ñoño*
cara rico roca cura cero coro riña caña cuña

This is perhaps the part of literacy acquisition than is often omitted in participatory education discourse. Ideas and principles found in participatory education are quite inspiring and challenging. However, it is often emphasized to such degree that the technical aspects of literacy acquisition remain in the shadow. The point is that there is no way to actually acquire literacy without this activity of combining syllables to form new words and rewrite them repeatedly in order to acquire good command of penmanship, also. Lastly, the objective of this paragraph is to show that we also have to talk about this component and not only about the wonderful discussions which illuminate critical reflection. For what happens prior or posterior to problem posing is part of the reality of acquiring literacy.

Since both critical reflection and mechanical aspects of literacy are necessary conditions to "become" literate and ideally enlightened, it is only through insisting on the importance of both that we begin to see results. For instance, as learners became familiar with more letters, our next step consisted of guiding the student to construct their own sentences.

In order to do an activity in which everyone could participate we used cardboard cards of approximately 3" x 3" in which consonants and vowels were combined. In addition to syllables, there were cards with single consonants and vowels to be used when necessary. Then, students would brainstorm a thought to be constructed with the cards. The sentence would be formed on a board covered with felt which would hold the cards. These were students' initial attempts to translate their thoughts into writing.

This activity was alternated with photographs which portrayed different classroom situations to motivate a discussion about learning. In some photographs, there were children and in others there were adults. Thus, the discussion evolved around learning in different stages of our lives and places. The following sentences were constructed as a result of this activity:

> *"Nunca es tarde para aprender" (It is never late to learn)*
> *"Todos podemos aprender si nos lo proponemos" (We all can learn if we have the initiative to do so).*
> *"La edad no debe impedirnos ir a la escuela" (Age should not stop us from going to school).*

The latter is only one example of the kind of activity that took place for the following two to three months. Simultaneously, we developed reading activities to complement their literacy learning. Students started by reading very short stories with illustrations on them. This exercise was done individually and collectively and followed by discusssions. At the same time, we experienced a great amount of dialogue in the form of discussions around themes of interest to the students. Through dialogue, we came to know their interest and priorities, which ultimately led to the inclusion of the following activities.

As the group improved writing and reading skills, a new variety of techniques and strategies were introduced; for example, compositions around specific topics. Mother's Day was the first of many writing activities. To illustrate how students' writing progressed, it is better to look at some of the students' first compositions:

En el día de la Madre	*In Mother's Day*
Madre mía en este día me he sentido muy contento que al recordarte madre me siento muy orgulloso, madresita linda dear mother	*Dear mother, in this day I have felt very happy that When I remember you I feel very proud, wonderful*
en este día te deseo lo más grande de mi vida, madre soy el hijo por quien tu sufristes para yo ser un hijo de tu corazón.	*in this day I wish you the greatest of my life, mother I am the son for whom you suffered so I could be a son of your heart.*
Carlos Morales	*(translation)*
13 de mayo de 1991.	*May 13, 1991.*

Carlos Morales literally did not know more that the vowels when he first came to our program. Unlike many other students who had some knowledge of some other letters and knew how to write a little bit, Carlos had to start from the beginning. He progressed very slowly. However, what worked in his advantage was the fact that everything he learned was new to him. What this means is that what he learned, although slowly, he learned well from the beginning, while students who had some reading and writing skills continued to make the same mistakes because what they knew was not necessarily correct. Carlos wrote very short compositions as we can see in the example above, but his writings needed little correction. The conclusion is that sometimes it takes longer to teach people whose literacy skills are poor in terms of not knowing things properly than people who have none since everything is new to them. It sometimes takes longer to unlearn something that we know improperly than something that is new at all.

Another student, Rosa Vargas, wrote about her experience of coming to the United States and leaving her children in El Salvador so she could try to support them.

Yo Rosa, llegué a este lugar con sólo mi vestido. Amigas y amigos me ayudaron en la ropa y la comida porque yo no tenía dinero para comprar las cosas mías. Pero hoy le mando dinero a mis hijos que son: Reina, Magdalena, Carmen y un niño varón que se llama Carlitos.

Yo me dejé con mi marido. Vi crecer a todos mis hijos. Cuando me vine dejé una niña de dos años. pero la cuida la niña más grande. Yo trabajo para mandarles todos lo que quieren, también me aflijo porque son cinco y por el momento no tengo trabajo.

29 de mayo de 1991.

<u>Translation</u>

I, Rosa, came to this place only with one dress. Friends helped me at first with clothes and food because I did not have any money to buy those things myself. But, now I send money to my children, Reina, Magdalena, Carmen and a little boy whose name is Carlitos.

I separated from my husband. I saw all my children grow up. when I left the littlest of my children was two years old, but the oldest looks after her. I

work to send them whatever they want, I also worry because they are five children and at this moment I do not have a job.

May 29, 1991.

[Rosalía has gone back to El Salvador after two years of trying to find a steady job without any success.]

Another student, Esperanza Calderón wrote a story about her childhood:

Yo me llamo Esperanza;
y esta es la historia que voy a contar:
yo voy a contar una historia que me pasó cuando yo era chica,
ésta era una vez, un día mi mamá me mandó a traer agua y
estaba lloviendo, y estaba liso el camino y andaba un cantarito
de tierra y me caí, y lo quebré, entonces me fuí para la casa
y cuando yo llegué a casa de mi mamá me preguntó del cantarito
y yo llorando le dije que lo había quebrado, porque me había
caído, y viene mi mamá y me dice; "hincate aquí que te voy a castigar
por haber quebrado el cantarito;" sólo por eso me castigo, porque ella
es bien enojada.

3 de Junio de 1991.

Translation

My name is Esperanza;
and this is the story I am going to tell:
I am going to tell a story about something that happened to me when I was little,
It was a time when my mother sent me to get some water and
it was raining, the road was slippery when I walked with a cantarito
-a little pot made of clay-
and I fell, and I broke it, then I went home
and when I arrived home my mother asked me for the cantarito
and I, crying, told her that I had broken it because I fell
Then my mother told me: "kneel down that I am going to punish you
for having broken the cantarito". She punished me just because of that,
for she gets very angry easily.

June 3, 1991.

Letter Writing

The inclusion of this segment is of vital importance, for it helps understand the impact that literacy had on the students. Originally all students in our program wanted to eventually be able to write letters to their families and friends. Nevertheless, when we made our first attempts, students reacted rather suspiciously about their capability to materialize this long-wanted goal. Letter writing was our next step after students had written small compositions such as the one above. It was not until five months after the begining of the program that we judged pertinent to start with this exercise. Their first hesitation had to do with feeling insecure about "actually writing a letter to someone". Another concern students had was that they still made too many errors and therefore no one would be able to read what they might write. They also experienced some fear about writing to someone

for the first time. All this issues are perfectly understandable and were taken into account.

How did we resolve this problem?

Around March of 1991 I met another Spanish Literacy teacher from New York City with whom I discussed the possibility of doing a letter exchange exercise with her students. Neither our students nor hers were ready for it when we first discussed this possibility, but two months later we talked again and then we decided that we would try it. She gave me a list of names of students and country of origin which I later distributed among our students. Each one picked one name to write to.

The Process

The process was not easy at the beginning, for there was so much uncertainty among our students, yet they had enough enthusiasm to get started. We first had to compose a model letter of the board to have an idea of how they could write their own. During this activity every student contributed with something they wanted to say. Once we did this, they started to write. The fact that they were going to write to the students in New York city brought up two new issues. First, it was going to be hard to write to people they did not know at all. Second, it was timely and quite advantageous that they were going to write to people with whom they shared the same experience. The first was only a problem at the beginning, and the latter prevailed because, in fact, they did have so much to share with each other and wrote back and forth exchanging their experiencies and views of being illiterate, the reasons why they were illiterate and the effect that it had in their lives.

To better illustrate this aspect, it is appropiate to show how some of our students at Harborside expressed this experience:

6 de Junio de 1991.

Estimado amigo,

Es un placer saludarlo y mis deseos son que encuentre bien de salud y me alegro al saber que también otra persona como yo está tratando de resolver el problema de no saber leer pues yo soy también otro estudiante que estoy tratanto de aprender a leer y a escribir y estoy contento porque yo a veces pensaba que nunca iba a aprender a leer. Hoy me doy cuenta de que yo si podía aprender a leer pues tengo cinco años de estar en este país y yo nunca en mi vida había tenido el placer de escribir una carta aunque sea a mi mamá pues yo soy de El Salvador y tengo 32 años y mi nombre es Miguel Soto. Para mi ha sido gran placer el haber tenido la oportunidad de haberte escrito estas pocas palabras. Espero que me conteste que para mi va a ser gran placer poder compartir esta experiencia.

Atentamente,
Miguel Soto

Translation:

June 6, 1991.

Dear friend:

It is a pleasure to send you my regards and I hope that you are O.K.. I am happy to find out that there is another person like me who is trying to resolve the problem of not knowing how to read, for I am a student who is trying to learn how to read and write. I am also happy because sometimes I

thought that I was never going to learn. Now, I realize that I could learn to read since I have been in this country for five years and never in my life I had had the pleasure to write a letter, not even to my mother in El Salvador where I come from. I am 32 years old and my name is Miguel Soto. It has been a great pleasure to have had the opportunity to write to you these few words. I hope that you answer me back since for me it will be a great pleasure to be able to share this experience.

Sincerely,
Miguel Soto

Another student wrote the following:

Boston, miércoles 5 de Junio de 1991.

María Calles
New York city

Estimada amiga:

Es para mí un gusto saludarte aunque no te conozco. Mi nombre es Alberto Rosa, soy de El Salvador, tengo veinticinco años, soy soltero y soy estudiante de alfabetización. Quiero contarte que estoy muy interesado en aprender a escribir y a leer y así poderle escribir a mi familia. Ahora yo ya principié a escribirle a mi familia y a mis amigos.

María quiero decirte que no es muy bonita mi letra pero espero que la entiendas. Espero que esta carta que te envío sea de tu agrado y me daría mucho gusto recibir tu contestación. Espero me cuentes como te va en la escuela aquí en New York. Nosotros estamos escribiendoles nuestra primera carta a ustedes para irnos acostumbrando y para perder el miedo. Por favor saludame a todos tus compañeros de clase y tu recibe mis más sinceros saludos.

Atentamente,
Alberto Rosa

Translation

Boston, wednesday June 5, 1991.

María Calles
New York city

Dear Friend:

Even though I do not know you, it is a pleasure to send you my regards. My name is Alberto Rosa, I am from El Salvador, I am 25 years old, I am single and I am a literacy student. I want to tell you that I am very interested in learning to write and read in order to write to my family. Now, I have already started to write to my family and friends.

María I want to tell you that my handwriting is not very pretty but I hope you are able to understand it. I hope that you like this letter and I am looking forward to hearing from you. I hope you tell me how school is going for you in New York. We are writing to you our first letter so we can get accustumed to and also to not be afraid any more of writing.

Please say Hello to all your classmates and receive my most sincere regards.

Yours,

Alberto Rosa.

It is also important to keep in mind that the writing of this first letter took a week (9 hours of instruction) and the final letter was not sent until students had done one or two drafts in which corrections were made.

Another student, Saúl Marino, shared with us a letter that he wrote to his godmother, which says the following:

Sra. María Contreras presente:

Mi recordada madrina es mi mayor deseo que cuando Ud. reciba la presente se encuentre muy bien de salud a lado de toda la familia. Luego de este humilde y cariñoso saludo paso a lo siguiente:

Bueno madrina, tengo el placer de escribirle esta cartita para decirle que gracias a Dios estoy muy bien en la escuela gracias a mis necesidades estoy aprendiendo mucho. Me doy cuenta yo mismo que no sabía nada pero leer y se me ha despertado el deseo de seguir adelante porque ahora ya puedo leer y escribir un poco. Para mí es una satisfacción tener que darme cuenta que la letra es muy importante para tener mejor sentido y poder coordinarse mejor en la vida para vivir una vida mejor.

También quiero saludar a mi compañero y padrino Miguel Mendoza deseándoles que estén alentados.

Esto es lo que su ahijado les desea y se despide,

Saúl Marino

P.S. Con un abrazo, no les digo adiós sino hasta pronto.

Saúl Marino (alfabetización II)
Mayo de 1992.

<u>Translation</u>

Mrs. María Contreras:

My dear godmother it is my wish that when you receive this letter you and your family enjoy good health. After this humble greeting I proceed to the following:

Well godmother, I have the pleasure of wrinting you this letter and tell you that, thanks God, I am doing very well at school where I find myself learning a lot. I have realized that I did not know how to read and now that I know how to write and read a little I feel this desire in me to want to get ahead. It is a great satisfaction for me to realize that "the letter" (literacy) is very important to have a better sense and be able to coordinate oneself better in life and to live a better life as well.

I also want to greet my comrade and godfather Miguel Mendoza wishing you all well.

This is what your godchild wishes you sincerely,

Saúl Marino

P.S. I tell you all goodbye with a big hug and so long.

Saúl Marino (Spanish Literacy II) May, 1992.

SUCCESSES: WHAT COULD THE STUDENTS DO OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM?

To better understand the impact that literacy acquisition had on the students, we can look at the following aspects in addition to the actual gains in reading and writing proficiency: their attitudes and feelings, the things they could do with literacy outside the classroom, their contributions to the community, and the implications for their futures.

First, the most common attitude that students manifested was looking at themselves as more independent individuals. As students progressed in their learning, their confidence grew simultaneously. It is vital to note that not having to depend on others as much as they used to had a very positive impact on their lives. Being independent was manifested primarily through the things they could do now. For instance, many students felt very proud of being able to write letters to their families and relatives in their native countries. Other expressed great satisfaction for being able to read signs in Spanish in public places such as hospitals and the subway. Two students are part of an AA group in which they have responsibilities. One is the treasurer and the other the secretary. In both capacities they have to exercise what they learned in the literacy class. While one of them has to register all the financial activities of the group, the other has to write the minutes of their meetings. In terms of literacy students' other contributions to the community, as many students improved their literacy skills they were able to help the lower level literacy students as well as relatives at home who could not attend classes.

For last, although all our students had different goals and ideas about to what degree they wanted to improve their literacy skills, most of them felt that it was very important to move on to ESL classes. Many of them, in fact, are now attending ESL classes at Harborside. A few of them would like to go beyond ESL classes and continue their education. For the latter, it is hard to tell how long it might take before they reach their goals. However, the most important is that they have discovered the potential they have and to what degree they want to transform their lives.

In sum, there is no doubt that dialogue is extremely important to know the students and their concerns. It is difficult to know to what extent teaching people how to write and read will liberate them from oppressive realities. However, learning how to write and read in itself increases self-esteem and independence not only in everyday life activities, but also to become fully responsible for one's reality as Freire points out. For the latter to happen, discovering and awareness have been important factors in the process. However we cannot assume that transformation will occur, at least in the way we, the teachers, define it. For, it is ultimately the students who have to decide what transformation means for them and how far they want to go towards achieving that goal.

Chapter Six: Evaluation

Since the BCLTP was primarily a training project (as opposed to a service delivery project), the evaluation of the project focuses mainly on how the community interns changed and grew as literacy instructors over the course of the project (rather than focusing primarily on student outcomes). Nevertheless, part of understanding the effectiveness of the interns entails looking at how the adult learners' literacy developed. Thus, this evaluation encompasses the development of the interns (changes in both their understandings about teaching and their classroom practice) as well as of students in project classes. In addition, it examines the impact of the project on the sites and their communities.

Although more has been written about the evaluation of adult literacy *instruction* than about the evaluation of adult literacy *teacher training*, we felt that many of the same principles apply. One of the guiding principles in literacy evaluation theory is that *evaluation processes and tools should be congruent with the instructional approach* (Lytle 1988). Since our approach to both instruction and training was a participatory one, emphasizing participant involvement, meaning-centered learning and the relationships between learning and the social context, an evaluation model focusing only on the acquisition of discrete, decontextualized skills (measured through tests or formal classroom-based assessments) would be inappropriate. When instruction itself is responsive to participants' needs and contexts, evaluation must look at how they use what they've learned in their everyday lives. Likewise, the evaluation of interns must look at how they use what they've learned in their practice. Thus, either measuring or presenting outcomes of the project only in quantitative terms would be misleading and intimidating for participants: it would undermine a participant-centered model of learning and and fail to capture many of the changes that occurred outside the immediate learning context. We wanted the participants themselves to be involved in assessing their own learning; in addition, we wanted to see how they developed over time and integrated what they learned in their daily interactions (rather than how they performed on isolated tasks).

For these reasons, this report stresses qualitative evaluation of both intern and student progress in order to capture the rich and varied ways that the impact of the project manifested itself. It incorporates data which was collected as an ongoing part of project documentation and formative evaluation - through minutes of meetings, anecdotes, observations and participant self-evaluations, as well as samples of participants' work (student writing, group stories, intern-generated texts, lesson plans, etc.). Quotes from interviews with interns (in which they discussed their evaluation of the project and its impact on them) are presented in boxes.

In evaluating the work of the project, we were guided by the following principles. In these guidelines (adapted from Auerbach 1992:114), 'participants' refers to either learners or interns, depending on the evaluation context.

Guiding Principles of Participatory Evaluation

Participatory evaluation is...

...contextualized, context-specific and variable: It doesn't try to measure isolated decontextualized skills, but rather examnines actual usages and practices. Assessment tasks have a purpose (i.e students are asked to write for magazine, not just to write in order to demonstrate progress). The particular forms that assessment takes can vary accordingly.

...qualitative: It involves reflective description, attempting to capture the richness of learning, rather than reducing it to numbers. It looks at metacognitive and affective factors.

...process-oriented: It is concerned with how and why participants develop.

...ongoing and integrated with instruction: It's purpose is to inform curriculum development and training or to address/explore a particular problem.

...supportive: It focuses on participants' strengths, what they *can* do rather than what they *can't* do. It starts with what students know and reflects their successes.

...collaborative: It's done *with* participants, not *to* them. Self-evaluation is an important part of developing metacognitive awareness and involvement in learning. Participants are subjects, not objects of the evaluation process.

...multi-faceted: Various participants evaluate each other. Not only do teachers evaluate students, but students evaluate teachers and program dynamics. Interns evaluate training as well as their development being evaluated.

...open-ended: It leaves room for and values the unexpected; non-predictable and one-time manifestations of change count.

Changes among interns

One of the most important lessons we learned in our training process is that changes don't occur linearly or evenly: interns' ideas about literacy and their practice developed at different rates and went through various phases depending on a number of factors, including their prior educational experiences, their current life situations, their reasons for participating in the project, and the context of their sites. Thus, how they changed cannot simply be attributed to what we did in the training itself: individual interns reacted differently to the same experiences. For some, ideas presented in the training immediately made sense and they tried them out right away; others expressed agreement with the ideas but didn't actually apply them in practice (at least not immediately), and still others went through various phases of resisting and embracing both the theory and the practice.

In addition, various aspects of interns' growth were not always readily visible or even evident during the life of the project; many of the positive effects of the project didn't surface until it was over. For example, one of the interns said that she only realized the value of the training after she had been hired as a teacher, months after the project ended: it was then that she appreciated the fact that she had been given a *framework* for curriculum development, rather than a specific *methodology* so that she could develop her practice in accordance with students' needs. In another case, also several months after the end of the project, a group of Creole teachers (some of whom had been interns) formed a Creole materials development group at the HMSC to address a need which had surfaced during the project.

By the same token, 'successes' cannot be counted by looking at 'outcomes' at only at one point in time. In one case, for example, an intern entered the project with quite a traditional, mechanical approach to literacy instruction and a somewhat authoritarian attitude toward students. As the Master Teacher and peers stressed the importance of taking learners' interests into account, she slowly began to change her attitude toward the students, to identify with them and to listen to what they said, even criticizing the Master Teacher at one point for not considering their perspective adequately. After the workshop about politics in literacy education, she said that she finally understood that politics is really part of daily life - it's more than just talking about war - and that she was beginning to see her own work in a new way. For the next several months, her work was much more creative and in tune with a participatory approach. However, when she continued as a volunteer after the funding ended and the Master Teacher left, she reverted to a mechanical approach in her teaching.

The point here is that examining intern changes cannot be reduced simplistically to a 'before' and 'after' analysis (*'before the project, interns did or thought X; afterwards, they did or thought Y'*). To frame this evaluation strictly in terms of "outcomes of training" would be misleading: it would miss the uneven development of the process and fail to capture the cumulative, cyclical nature of growth. Thus, the following analysis of the impact of the project on interns will look at various stages of their thinking and practice, rather than just at results.

This evaluation will examine several broad categories of change among interns: changes in their ways of thinking about and participating in training, changes in their views of what literacy is and how it should be taught, changes in their actual classroom practice, changes in their views of themselves and their possibilities, and, changes in their roles outside the classroom. Finally, it will then present information on what interns did after they left the project - how they used what they learned in the next stage of their lives.

Changes in conceptions of and participation in training

Most of the interns came into the project expecting and wanting a transmission model of training. Perhaps because of their own prior educational experiences and their lack of confidence about teaching, they wanted to be told what to do and given a 'method' to apply in the classroom. This expectation may have been reinforced by the fact that this was called a training project: the word 'training' itself implies that a skill will be transmitted. The starting point in terms of interns' **conceptions of training**, thus, was a desire for the 'experts' to prescribe a specific set of methods and techniques that would be directly transferable to each classroom.

Interns embraced the participatory model of training at various rates; quite early in the project, some interns not only accepted it, but actively took on responsibility for explaining it to others, as the following excerpt from the minutes shows:

> At a site evaluation, one of the interns said that she had expected a more formal presentation of methods. When she said this, another intern said that the purpose of the workshops isn't to present only one way to do things (in this case, deal with corrections), but *to provide a place to share ideas and debate with each other.*

Interns' **ways of participating in the training** also changed quickly: while they at first saw themselves as passively absorbing the 'received knowledge' of experts, by the fourth workshop, they eagerly took on responsibility for bringing their own knowledge and experience into the trainings as content for discussion and dialogue; in that workshop, they created codes about teaching problems and engaged in animated debate about how to address them. They carried over this active role to the sites, where, for example, some often took responsibility for explaining what happened at a workshop to others who had been absent. In addition, in follow-up discussions at the sites, if one intern did not understand some aspect of the workshop, others would explain it. In each case, these discussions served as a way of reviewing and internalizing workshop content. Further, individual interns increasingly took the initiative to bring in their own activities and materials to the workshops. One of the interns, Felipe Vaquerano, actually took responsibility for planning and conducting a workshop (the workshop on games in April 1992).

As the workshops provided space for interns to reflect on their own experiences and generate the collective knowledge of the group, their **notions of what counts as expertise** began to change. Gradually they began to value their own knowledge and gain a sense of themselves as experts. This transformation in their

conceptions of expertise and shift in stance about their own knowledge went through various stages. It started with a realization that they could learn a lot from each other. In place of asking us to tell them what to do, many began to see each other as resources and appreciate opportunities to hear from each other. As one intern said, *"sharing with others makes me understand how to work with my own little group."*

They then began to develop a *critical discourse about workshops* themselves. As they evaluted the workshops in light of their own experiences and classroom realities, they gained confidence in criticizing outside 'experts.' They did this first in site-based evaluations after a workshop, questioning the applicability of a presenter's ideas (were the activities relevant to the level of our classes, would students actually engage in them, etc.). They then did this within the context of a workshop itself in response to a video about beginning ESL literacy. Toward the end of the project, interns had enough trust in their own knowledge and practice to directly challenge the expertise of an outside presenter face to face in a workshop. They did this through a series of questions designed to highlight the relationship between theory and practice; their sense was that even though the presenter knew a lot about theory, they had a stronger base of practice and, in fact, could teach her a lot.

The following excerpt from an intern interview sums up the process that many of the interns went through:

> To tell you the truth, in the beginning, when I started to go to the training, I was expecting that you would give us the materials and show us the way to teach. That was my idea. When I started going, I thought, gee, this was different. Why did they come with these different ideas, why didn't they tell us "you have to do this and that"? ...to tell you the truth, the more I went to the trainings, I really enjoyed it. I saw the different ways you were introducing and I think that was the best idea - not the way we are used to doing it: you do this and you follow. You gave us the opportunity to grow - not to depend on somebody else. The workshops gave us the ideas and we wanted to apply them. At least they give you the ideas, and it's up to you...So, I think it works better that way. In my opinion, it's been wonderful. I look through the notes and when I read them, I know I can apply them. If I think it would be too difficult, I try to do it another way where it would be more simple and the [the students] would understand. But the ideas are great... I didn't expect that in the beginning.

Conceptions about literacy and literacy pedagogy

Changes in interns' conceptions about training were mirrored by changes in their conceptions about what literacy is and how it should be taught: just as they had started by expecting a somewhat traditional model of training, many were preoccupied with mechanical aspects of literacy instruction at first. They viewed literacy acquisition as a linear process starting with the smallest units (letters and sounds), moving through decontextualized subskills and achieving mastery at each level before moving on to the next. For them, acquiring these skills preceded reading or writing whole meaningful texts, thinking or connecting literacy to life experiences. Some saw their own role as transmitting skills to students in what Freire called a banking model of teaching.

Again, however, there was unevenness in this regard among interns; those interns who grasped a participatory approach to literacy pedagogy first actively took responsibility for challenging each others' ideas. For example, when one intern said that she thought that the approach to education was too informal ("I don't think we can solve the problems of the world. Why do we talk about unemployment - this is not a jobs agency"), other interns disagreed, with one saying, *"So where is thinking left if you present worksheets and follow formal methods?"* In another case, when one intern argued that conscientization is OK for teaching literacy in third world countries but not in the U.S. (that loaded issues like politics and religion should be kept out of the classroom), another countered, *"But isn't that part of life? And life is what we use to teach them!"* She went on to say that she uses students' context all the time and that includes loaded issues.

Once interns began to see the value of connecting 'the word' (mechanical aspects of literacy instruction) and 'the world' (students' life experiences and concerns), many of them felt overwhelmed and inadequate. They wondered how they could address students' enormous problems in class and, at the same time, felt the need or desire to solve the problems *for* students. Gradually, however, as they gained more experience in developing codes, using participatory tools and hearing about others' successes in the workshops, many of them began to try new things in their teaching. This, in turn, pushed them to change their ideas. Thus, changes in their thinking triggered changes in their practice, and vice versa (changes in their practice are described in the next section). Through this process, they began to see their role as one of posing rather than solving problems.

Evidence of changes in interns' conceptions about literacy comes from the ways in which they talked about literacy pedagogy at various points. Early in the first cycle of training, for example, after an entire workshop on drawing out student issues and using them to develop LEA stories, when interns were asked if there was anything else they wanted to talk about, they focused on a spelling problem in Spanish and confusion between g and j in Creole. Just a few months later, however, when the group did a brainstorming activity about literacy pedagogy, the key concepts that interns mentioned included "learners' contexts, critical thinking, content, respect, discover, explore, problem posing, codes, issues...;" the only mechanical concept mentioned was 'alphabet'.

Interns' ways of talking about **learner and teacher roles** also changed; increasingly they began to talk about learners as central to the educational process. For example, some of them criticized the teaching in an ESL literacy video as being too childish and focusing too much on one activity; in addition, they commented, *"We didn't get any idea about the students by watching the video. Everything in the lesson came from the teacher except for how to say rainbow in different languages."* Several months later, at a session in which an outside presenter elicited interns' conceptions about literacy, interns stressed notions like "being able to be independent in society, knowledge of what is going on around oneself"; when she asked about their views of the teacher and student roles, they talked about the teacher as a facilitator and guide, *"someone who unveils or awakens the soul"* and the student as *"someone who guides the teacher."*

As the project proceeded, interns adopted the actual discourse of a Freirean model of literacy pedagogy in workshops and conversations with each other. The following excerpt from minutes of a HMSC meeting, illustrates the extent to which this discourse became a part of everyday interactions between interns:

> Carey wanted to talk about the approach he uses in class. He said that students think that you, as a teacher, are there to tell them what to do. He had thought that they would tell him want they wanted but they wait and say 'you are the teacher.' Carey said, "It's because they're from Haiti. The student in Haiti has no rights; the teacher tells you everything. You have to memorize the words. This influences students. 'We come here to receive something.' *It's a banking approach."* He asked Harry (another intern), "What do you think?"

This excerpt, in addition to revealing Carey's use of the language of participatory education, demonstrates the extent to which he has internalized its philosophy: first, he identifies learners' conceptions of the teachers' role as a pedagogical struggle; second, he incorporates an analysis of why his students respond as they do, looking at the role of their prior educational experience and its socio-political context. Third, he turns, not to the 'experts' (eg. the mentor, coordinator, or curriculum specialist, all of whom were present at the meeting), but to a fellow intern for help in addressing this concern.

A related change concerned interns' conceptions about **the role of students and context in curriculum development.** In place of wanting a particular method to apply across the board, they came to realize that each context is different and that the curriculum must emerge from work with a particular group of students. Interns began to resist simplistic prescriptions, as their comments about the video illustrate:

> Playing wouldn't be taken seriously by my students. The techniques in the video might not work for everybody. It is up to each teacher to try out what will work with your group. Any time someone presents a technique like in this video, it's always very limited. *Whether it will work depends on the context of your class.*

They began to articulate the importance of looking to their own students, rather than imposing a uniform method in every situation. In the following excerpt from HMSC minutes, interns are reacting to a Creole literacy expert's advice to focus exclusively on Creole in beginning classes:

> The discussion started by a questioning of whether "we need to accept someone else's approach over our own experience." One of the interns said that rather than deciding students MUST learn a certain way, he tries to find out what they need and want. He says that the key is participants' willingness to learn."*My job is not to give them knowledge; they're not empty - there is some knowledge in them which is not conventional knowledge that we need to develop.*"

The extent to which interns moved from a transmission model of literacy pedagogy to one which centers on the learners and their context is best expressed by the following quote from an interview with an intern:

> You cannot transplant, you cannot think, "Hey, Eugenie tried this, and I am gonna try it in my class because it worked for her." No, it doesn't work like this. You have to know your own students in such a way to really get something good out of them. There aren't any specific tools that will always work because each learner has his own problem and I am supposed to find it. What I learned from all those workshops - there is a problem and you as a teacher are like an investigator - you have to find it and once you get it, then you say, "This is how I'm going to work."... The context of the students is very important. The culture of the student - I can work with Haitian people because their culture is my culture. It's the same culture. But, I wonder, if I had to work with another group - whose culture I did not know - would I be able to make that same impact?

Changes in classroom practice

What the interns actually did in the classroom also mirrored their changing reactions to training. At the beginning, since they framed the teacher's role as one of being the source of information and solving all the problems, they were nervous about their own capacities. Some relied heavily on the Master Teacher, passively observing, waiting to be told what to do, or following the teacher's lead. Gradually, however, they began to take on more responsibility (first working with individual students, then with small groups, then with the whole class under the mentor's supervision, and finally with their own classes). They began to take the initiative in developing lessons, introducing new activities and creating their own tools. The key in this process was that they took more responsibility when they were ready - when it was organic and natural, not according to predetermined schedule.

One way that interns' practice changed was in regard to **curriculum and lesson planning.** Many started by wanting Master Teachers to tell them what to do and say at every step of teaching. They didn't feel confident about teaching without a pre-determined curriculum. At the JMCS, for example, the interns wanted detailed instructions to be written for them whenever they worked in small groups. Yet six months later, the same interns stated rather forcefully that they had decided to wait until they had met their students to plan because they couldn't know what to prepare until they knew more about their students. They consciously chose not to develop an a priori curriculum. Later, when one of them was hired as a teacher, she asked if she could throw out the site's general curriculum guidelines for her class and create a new one appropriate for her students. Likewise, at the HMSC, one of the interns started by trying to implement a weekly plan (teaching writing on Mondays, vocabulary on Tuesdays, reading on Wednesdays, grammar and dictation on Thursdays); when this didn't work, he began each day by asking students what they wanted to do. He evolved toward drawing themes from their lives and developing them through the routine use of certain tools (LEA, codes, etc.). In general, by the end of the project, the tension between the need to have a plan and the need to be responsive to emerging issues was resolved as interns became more comfortable both with developing their own plans and with going with the flow. They balanced careful planning with letting go of the plan. Julio captured the essence of this approach when he said, *"It's important to plan and let the improvisation come from the class reaction to the plan."*

A second change in practice concerned **the relationship between the mechanical and meaningful aspects of teaching literacy.** At the beginning, many interns tended to focus mainly on decontextualized skills work; they were preoccupied with form and accuracy (correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.). In one case, an intern even went so far as to correct students' papers for them, erasing incorrect forms and replacing them with the correct ones. Even when interns began to see the importance of drawing out learners' ideas and recognized the depth of learners' capacity to think, they were often at a loss about how to connect conscientization to literacy learning. Some classes would have heated debates about world events and then go back to rote work on sound-symbol correspondences. While substantive discussions could be justified as conversation work in the ESL classes, both interns and learners often felt they were a diversion from real work in the native language literacy classes. The dilemma was that on the one hand, students would quickly lose interest in mechanical work because it was boring, but also lose interest in 'telling a story' because they didn't see it as real work.

Gradually, however, the question of correct form stopped being a central preoccupation. Interns began to see that students wrote more and developed more quickly if meaning was the focus. Thus, for example, when a new group of beginning students started at Harborside after the interns had been working for about six months, the interns brought in photos to elicit writing even though the students didn't know the whole alphabet. The interns reacted to their initial efforts by encouraging them to write more and didn't correct them. Likewise, interns changed their way of responding to dialogue journals: whereas at first, many had corrected mistakes, they began to respond to content of students' writing.

In addition, interns' growing skill and confidence in **using the tools** that were presented in workshops contributed to their ability to integrate the mechanical and conscientization aspects of teaching. In terms of finding topics or themes, where many had started either by just asking students what they wanted to do or by imposing topics, they learned how to elicit issues from students through structured activities. One intern, for example, complained at the beginning that "the students never have any stories"; she would start a lesson by presenting a new word and explaining its meaning. Within a few months, however, she was eliciting students' conceptions of key words and how they related to learners' lives, developing LEA stories from their responses, using games, and framing her discussion of student outcomes in terms of the development of their thinking (not just skills/mechanics). Interns learned to make mechanical exercises interesting by connecting them to learners' lives (eg. an ESL intern taught *wh-* questions by eliciting what students knew about a Haitian singer performing in Boston). They also gained skill in following up discussions with concrete literacy activities (from key words, to LEA stories, codes, dialogue journals, and photostories) as the following illustrates:

> Romeo's class discussed the murder of a Haitian taxi driver which happened last week. He asked the students if they had heard about it; a big discussion evolved. They talked about raising children in the U.S. and how to distinguish them from black Americans. Very fundamental questions about race and ethnicity were discussed. After that he wrote down the key words, broke them down in syllables and created some new words from them.

Interns also came to realize the importance of carefully structuring questions and linking discussion to concrete experiences rather than leaving it at a general level. In one case, students complained about having to watch a video of Aristide's inauguration. However, when the intern asked very concrete questions, linking the video to students' own lives, and followed it up with a group story, key words, individual stories, and correction work, their response was positive (see p.104). By the time of the coup against Aristide in the fall of '91, interns were able to integrate the conscientization and mechanical aspects of teaching in a variety of sophisticated ways (see p. 72).

Interns' practice also changed with regard to **teacher-student roles, participant structures, and classroom dynamics.** In some cases, interns began with teacher-fronted classrooms in which they were at the center of all interactions. Side conversations between students were seen as discipline or classroom management problems. One intern, for example, initially had students work quietly at their seats while she went over each ones' homework individually with them. If there were problems with particular students or tensions between students, interns felt that they had to intervene as the authority to 'handle the problem.' Differences in levels between students were seen as problematic; groups were separated by level.

As time went on, however, interns began to reconceptualize issues of classroom dynamics and experiment with different participant structures. For example, side conversations sometimes came to be seen as opportunities instead of

diversions. In one case, an intern noticed that one group was having an excited discussion while she was working with another group and asked them them to write about whatever they were talking about; this became the basis for a group story. Many interns began to see differences in level as a resource rather than a problem. The intern who had required students to work quietly at their seats started having more advanced students work with beginners while she did one-to-one work; she integrated culture-specific knowledge to shape participation (referring to a proverb to get them to help each other). Another intern invited advanced students to give dictation to a less advanced group. Several interns moved toward building peer learning and mixed level groups into their classrooms.

Interns began to see students as resources in addressing teaching problems. In several cases, interns brought issues of dynamics back to the group (eg. use of the L1 in ESL class, uneven participation, children in class, etc.), and students developed guidelines for handling them. Interns' new way of seeing their relationship to learners is captured by the following words:

> In my teaching, I try to really do the things we learned or heard in our training. I tried to do them because they were new to me. And in those things, I see that the students are the bosses. The have to participate in giving us the materials for teaching... It's like we listen to them. That's what I do in my teaching.

Another area in which interns' practice changed concerned **finding and creating materials.** While at first, interns hoped to be given the perfect text to guide their teaching, they gradually began to take greater initiative in finding and developing their own materials. One asked her mother in Central America to send a map; interns at the HMSC asked friends or siblings to bring back material from Haiti on several occasions. One intern developed her own method for incorporating pictograms into sentence exercises. Others invented games. One developed an entire math curriculum for his literacy class. As I mentioned earlier, HMSC interns decided to form a materials development group, because they felt they were just as capable of creating materials as their counterparts in Haiti and probably in a better position to do so.

A key area of growth among interns concerned the development of **a stance of inquiry and investigation.** Many interns began to address questions and push forward their practice by experimenting with various activities or tools (rather than asking others for the 'best method'). For example, one intern tried two ways of presenting pictures as a catalyst to writing, once with structured questions and once without; afterwards she concluded (contrary to her expectations) that the open-ended way worked better because it allowed space for students to write about their own experiences. The following excerpt from HMSC minutes shows how another intern experimented with ways of using selections from Voices:

> Carey said he usually asks questions about the text but he has started doing it a different way. Now he shows the students a picture. Then he ask them some questions about the picture and writes their answers on the board. Then he asks the students to make some questions based on those answers. This week he tried a story about getting a driver's license. He asked the students what a license is and what you see on a license. They made questions from their responses and went on to read the story.

Interns not only engaged in this type of exploration but recognized its value and came to see it as one of the strengths of the project. At the Freire conference, when someone in the audience noted the great range of methods presented (including some that were quite traditional), interns responded by saying that one of the great things about the project was that *it gave them the freedom to explore and investigate their own ways of doing things* - that they could try whatever made sense for their own groups and evaluate how it worked. In a sense, the fact that some of the interns were presenting quite traditional activities at the conference showed the power of the model: that people develop at their own pace, and no one has to teach in a prescribed way. At the same time, the questions at the conference triggered reflection and prompted some of the interns to begin to change.

As interns became more reflective about their work, they also developed the **ability to be self-critical about their own practice.** They began to acknowledge when classes didn't go well and analyze the reasons, internalizing problem-posing as a way to look at their own teaching. In one case, an intern hypothesized that the reason students had had difficulty with a particular reading was that he hadn't done enough preparation linking it to students' experience before presenting the text. In his words, "Each story has to be in the students' context." Interns began to look to their peers for insights; for example, an intern reported that his students had resisted writing an LEA story, and asked others for insights about why; they wondered if the story might have been too personal and suggested doing it in the third person. The following quote from an intern summarizes this process of learning to become self-critical and reflective through teacher-sharing:

> Sometimes you don't recognize your mistakes until you have them in front of you or maybe in the end. We have stereotypes and then by the conversation, you start to realize what you were doing wrong and wonder 'Why did I do that?' And then it's like you become critical - thinking of yourself. And you try to don't do that again. I think that I've learned to be more - how can I say - to be more sure of what I was going to do or to say. Instead of just throwing out what I think.

Self-concept and confidence

Most of the interns entered the project with some fear and hesitation about their own capacity to teach. They were nervous about standing in front of a group, and about teaching people who, in many cases, were older than they were. They were worried that the students wouldn't listen to them, that they wouldn't know what to do or be able to answer questions. In addition, the ESL interns were concerned about whether their English was good enough and whether their students would respect them because they weren't native English speakers. The following quote sums up these feelings:

> I think, in the beginning, it was kind of hard, not only for me but for the students because they do not feel very confident with you and I felt not that confident too because I didn't have the experience working with them. It was hard to make them participate, or at least, talk to us to give some feedback. I tried to be friendly, to give them the confidence that they needed to participate or to put myself in their position, to feel important, not because they don't know how to write - so they are a person who thinks, who has good thought.

Once interns started teaching, many were pleasantly surprised by how quickly they felt comfortable and how readily students accepted them. They used strategies like the one described above in which the intern overcame her own lack of confidence by putting herself in the learners' shoes and trying to instill confidence in them. The general feeling of the group is expressed in the words of another intern who said, *"I couldn't see myself as a teacher, but I discovered that students were my allies."* Virtually all of the interns said that gaining a sense of self-confidence was one of the most important outcomes of the project for them, as the following quote indicates:

> This was a very exciting experience. I learned more than I thought because when I started, like I said before, I didn't feel confident with myself and, you know, I thought I couldn't do it. And now I know that I can... It has changed in the way that I have more experience. It doesn't take me as much time to prepare classes. I have a lot of ideas now. Of course, I think about what I am going to do - but it is easier - not like before- I didn't know what to do, what would be fine for this day. Should I do this, should I do that? Is this going to be right? I don't feel that insecurity that I had.

Another way that interns' self-concept changed concerned their **sense of identity.** Many of the interns began to reconceptualize their own histories and take a new pride in who they were. Early in the project, many didn't want it mentioned that they were housekeepers, factory workers, etc. - they saw these low status jobs as a stigma; through the project, they came to realize that this stigma was socially constructed and that their movement from these positions to teaching showed their strength. They realized that their situations in the U.S. were not something to be embarrassed about. One intern expressed the new view of herself in terms of claiming her own identity. She said that since she had been in the U.S. she had tried to avoid her identity: "I didn't know who I was." As a Brazilian, she had tried to separate herself from Hispanics and, as she said, "deny who I am so I wouldn't be discriminated against." Through the project, she came to see her unity with other Latinos and to claim it. Another intern said that the project allowed her to assert her identity as a Central American; she began to see herself as a model for her peers. As she said, *"It gave me the opportunity to show other people from Central America that they can do more than just earn money here."*

Thus, the process was a cyclical one for many interns: they asserted their own identity by contributing to their communities, and this, in turn, helped to transform the meaning of work for them. They gained a new sense of satisfaction from going to work, unlike the way they felt about their jobs in factories or (as in the following case) hotels:

> My life has changed a lot. Now I feel better because I helped them [the students]. I feel nice. When I come to work, I don't say, "Oh, it's time to work," I say, "Oh! It's time to go to class. I like it!" *I come happy.*

From the interns' perspective, one of the most important aspects of the project was that it gave them a sense of community and a chance to get to know people from other nationality groups over an extended period of time. It provided a much needed source of support as they struggled with living in a new culture.

> I feel like part of a big family because I don't have any of my relatives here. This is where I share ideas with people whom I really enjoy. I hope it will stay like this. They say, "Carey is a romantic." It is not romantic; it is a reality. You need things like this in your life.

Many interns mentioned **learning how to work with others** as one of the most important ways they changed during the project. At several of the sites, tensions arose when interns started to co-teach in the same classroom. Each had his/her way of doing things, and sometimes felt threatened by the other's way; they had a hard time listening to each other and were worried that their ideas wouldn't

be heard or respected. Through the patient facilitation of the Master Teachers, these conflicts were resolved and, as this quote indicates, interns came to see learning how to work through this process as key, not just for this project, but for future jobs:

> L. told Elsa that one of the most important things she learned from this project is how to work with other people. She said that midway through the training, she had almost quit because it was so hard to come to agreement with the other people in her group who had strong ideas about what to do; but she realized that no matter what job she has in her life, she will have to work with other people and get along with them so she should try to learn how to do this. She said that she was learning how to listen and figuring out a way of working together.

In many cases, interns note only learned to listen to each other, but to *challenge each other in a supportive way* as well. The following exchange illustrates this process; it started when one intern complained that some of his students were lazy. Rather than confronting the intern's attitude directly, another intern posed a question which triggered a discussion about motivation, turning a potential conflict into an opportunity for dialogue about what holds students back and what helps them to progress.

> C. asked if the students are really lazy or is it something else? J. said that some students don't try because they think they'll never be able to do it. Why try? M. added that maybe they're afraid of making a mistake and that other students will laugh at them. C. said that other things might conflict with their ability to learn, such as problems with life in the U.S. or the situation in Haiti. J. said that it it is still our responsibility to motivate students. You have to start by letting them feel confident. H. said that one student said that he is going to work hard; because of that others felt peer pressure and began to work harder also. Students push each other and praise each other for their work.

A further indication of interns' growing self-confidence was their growing sense of **ownership and autonomy** over their own work. Interns came to see themselves as peers with the Master Teachers; in one case, for example, an intern told the Master Teacher to be careful about the words he used with students because they might not be familiar with them. In another case, interns questioned whether they should accept the criticique of a university professor (concerning the proverb book) just because he was an expert. Changes in responses to outside researchers also indicated an increasing sense of control and empowerment regarding interns' own work. For example, early in the project when a doctoral student came to observe one of the interns, he didn't question her presence even though he didn't know why he was being observed. A few months later, when other researchers requested permission to include the site in a study, the interns asserted their right to ask why they wanted to visit, what they would use the research for, and what the site would get out of it; they developed criteria for and questions about site visits.

In addition, interns became confident about themselves as peers in a broader community, recognizing their own knowledge and commitment to a particular approach to teaching. For example,when one of the interns went to a conference in Washington with biliteracy experts from around the country, he felt quite comfortable in criticizing the way the conference was organized, pointing ou: that the fact that presenters were required to submit papers in English automatically precluded participation by those who were not fluent in English academic discourse. In another case, Marilyn talked about realizing how much she knew as she participated in a conference with educators from around the world:

> When we went to the Paulo Freire conference, I realized that I was able to understand whatever they were saying. If I wouldn't have been in this project, I would not have been able to understand what they were doing. Even if you have some experience - like with that lady back home [someone she had taught to read and write] - I just did it mechanically, but it's something different. We realize that because we have learned so many things. Now we know how to help that person in many ways - how to adapt to that person, how to make them motivated, how to create an atmosphere to make it more interesting for that person to learn. I learned how to do that. You just don't do things for the sake of doing them. There is a way of doing it.

Roles and responsibilities in the center and the broader literacy community

Interns not only grew in personal and professional ways, but they also contributed to the development of their own communities and the field of adult literacy as a whole. As interns became more self-confident about their practice, they took on new roles both at their sites and in the broader literacy community. Thus, their impact came to be felt outside the confines of the project itself. In terms of the sites, in several cases, interns became involved in *center-wide activities and issues*. They began to help with recruitment, in-take, assessment, and site publications. For example, Harborside interns conducted an open house for potential students; interns at the JMCS were largely responsible for the publication of the Center magazine (from solicitation of manuscripts, to editing, lay-out and production); at the HMSC, interns helped to identify and resolve center-wide problems (suggesting a bulletin board for staff announcements to facilitate communication). Many interns showed incredible committment to their students by taking on additional responsibilities without pay: they stayed late to tutor them after class, took them to the hospital or lawyers, and helped them with personal problems. One of the interns talked about the project changing her whole perspective on her relationship to the community. In the process of learning how to listen as a teacher, she became more involved in the lives of the learners and her commitment to the community grew:

> [The teaching] makes me change in my relationship with other people. By listening you think more, you think more of other people, you become more a listener, you listen more to people. And I also think that being involved in the project, I am always talking about it and I think that that does change me in a sense that I'm always encouraging other people to be more involved in the Haitian community. At first I didn't care but now I take time just to get people to volunteer and to speak with them about the project. In the beginning I wasn't really interested in that. And it not only changed me but other people told me, "I can see that you are doing something useful or something wonderful" and that is really encouraging.

In terms of the broader literacy community, interns participated in projects and activities which contributed to the development of the field: some became involved in a State Department of Education assessment project; others shared their work at state-sponsored workshops. One became a mentor for a graduate student from the UMass Bilingual/ESL Graduate Studies Program. Comments from the graduate student's journal provide independent verification of the intern's skill in implementing a participatory approach.

> In general, the last few weeks' readings and discussions (participatory approach, LEA's, codes) [in the graduate class] have reminded me a great deal of Felipe's class at Jackson-Mann. I can't say that I have tried to match the methods up point for point, but my overall sense is that much of the essential character of the participatory approach as it has been presented to us remains intact [in Felipe's class]. I seem to do a lot of nodding to myself either in his class or while reading as I recognize the practice of (in class) or understand the meaning of (in readings) such things as the list of "problem-posing techniques for beginners" found ... in Wallerstein. I feel it underscores for me the value of "meaningful, contextualized input."

Categories of change among interns

Conceptions of training	
	Expectations of workshop content and process Views of the source of knowledge Views of trainer/trainee roles Stance toward expertise Discourse about training
Participation in training	
	Ability to share and debate ideas Responsibility for workshop activities Preparation and planning of workshops Ability to evaluate training critically Ability to challenge experts Ability to explain workshop content to peers
Conceptions about literacy and literacy pedagogy	
	View of mechanical vs. meaningful aspects of literacy View of the role of methods View of curriculum development Ability to articulate and express participatory model Views of teacher/student roles View of sources of knowledge and lesson content Ability to articulate and advocate for participatory model
Classroom practice	
	Approaches to and skill in lesson planning Integration of mechanical and meaningful aspects of literacy instruction Skill in identifying students' needs and issues Skill in facilitating discussion Skill in connecting dialogue to literacy work Skill in using specific tools Ability to vary participant structures Ability to facilitate peer learning Problem-posing ability Ability to address problems of classroom dynamics Stance of inquiry and investigation Ability to reflect on and criticize own practice Approach to and skill in finding, using and creating appropriate materials
Self-concept and confidence	
	Self-confidence Definitions of identity Conceptions of and feelings about work Ability to work with others Ability to challenge peers Ability to challenge authorities
Site and community roles	
	Responsibilities at site (recruitment, in-take, etc.) Participation in discussion of site issues Participation in local/state literacy projects Mentoring for other teacher-learners Dissemination - conference presentations

Interns also took on increasingly greater roles in the *dissemination of information about our project*. At first, their participation in conferences was limited to listening to other presenters. Then they began to participate as presenters. They were quite nervous about their first group presentation at a conference, spending long hours preparing and rehearsing what they would say. By the end of the project, they had gotten to the point that they could speak spontaneously with ease, field questions and even be self-critical about their own presentations. They developed their own handouts, flip charts and role-plays, were able to discuss their own and others' conference presentations critically and redesign presentations for changing contexts. Interns had made presentations at four state-wide conferences (for ESL and adult literacy teachers) and at two international conferences (the Freire conference and a TESOL Convention).

Interns' participation in conferences was important not just because of how it affected their own self-confidence and presentation skills, but also because of how it affected the profession itself. While the impact of the project as a whole on the communities of the sites and on the field is discussed further below, it is worth noting here that, in many cases, people from our project constituted the only language or racial minority representation at the conference. As such, the interns' voices served an important function in raising the issue of diversification of the field. The chart on the facing page summarizes the domains in which interns changed during the course of the project. While every intern did not demonstrate change in each of these categories, they represent the overall growth of the group.

Interns' next steps after project participation

One of the key evaluation questions concerns how the project shaped the educational and career possibilities of interns once they had completed their training. For many of the interns, the sense of efficacy and new found confidence that they gained in the project had direct implications for their career or occupational goals. The majority of interns decided to go back to school, to go on to higher education and/or to change to a teaching career. One intern, who had studied medicine in Haiti, and had been working as a receptionist since she arrived in the U.S., talked about the project had prompted her to rethink her plans:

> I didn't think I would like it. I didn't think I would be so involved. Just to think about further education or to change my field - I didn't expect that. I thought that it would be something on the side. I thought I might pursue another field, but not education... But I'm really pleased that I participated in this project because ... it really helped me in my work and in myself to find a career. I was kind of undecided what I was going to do. But I feel that I have become more stable now, because I tried what I learned in the project and this really worked. And that left me with the feeling, "All right, I'm going to try other things..." That brought me confidence.

The following chart captures the big picture of what happened to interns after they left the project. Since many of the interns fall into more than one category (combining teaching with further education, or continuing education but not literacy work), the percentages do not add up to 100%.

What interns did after the end of the project

Continued to work at the sites in some capacity	75%
Hired as literacy/ESL teachers	30%
Volunteered as literacy teachers	20%
Worked in some other community capacity (day care/refugee resettlement in-take)	25%
Continued with education	50%
University	25%
Community college	10%
Continued with another literacy training project	15%
Did not continue with literacy or community work	15%
Left the country for personal reasons	5%
Stopped working after having a baby	5%
Changed career interest	5%

This chart suggests some significant patterns - that the vast majority of the interns continued to work in the community-based agencies after they left the project, that half went on to further education, and that very few did not apply what they had learned in the project immediately after leaving it (although, personal reasons accounted for most of these). At the same time, however, these numbers only tell a small part of the story. What they do not reveal is the incredible struggle that the sites had finding funding to continue classes that had been started by the project, and, in particular, to hire interns as regular teachers. While each of the sites had prioritized hiring interns upon completion of their training, they were able to secure funding to do so only a fraction of the time. Thus, while interns were trained, experienced and eager to work, and the sites were eager to hire them, the funding situation did not permit it in many cases.

In addition, the chart cannot show the impact of the project in the context of individual lives. The following examples give a sense of the impact of the project which cannot be captured by a chart:

*The intern who had been a medical student in her home country and worked as a telephone receptionist in the U.S. went on to become literacy/health educator in a program for pregnant women after the training in the project; thus,, she was able to combine her prior expertise in health care with her newfound interest in education work.

*Another intern, who had been trained as an elementary school teacher in her home country but had decided not to pursue teaching, changed her mind as a

result of the approach in the project, seeing that teaching could go beyond a banking model and be a creative process.

*One of the interns had worked on an assembly line in a plastics factory before starting this project. His work in the project was so exemplary that after the project ended, he was hired as a Mentor teacher in a subsequent project by a different site, selected from a field of several qualified candidates.

*A new ESL project, started by a local union, hired three former interns from our project as its staff.

*When the Catholic Charities opened a center for unaccompanied minor children who were Haitian refugees, one of the interns from the project was hired as its administrative coordinator.

*Three of the interns were so committed to their students that they continued classes on a volunteer basis after funding ended.

Changes among learners

In looking at the ways that literacy and ESL learners changed during the course of the project, we focused more on evaluating classes and groups than on assessing individual students. We asked, "How are learners' literacy practices and uses changing?" rather than "How much are they changing?" We were concerned about what learners said or showed about literacy and English in their lives rather than with test scores. There were several other reasons that we did not attempt to use a formalized testing approach to analyze progress. First, two of the sites involved native language literacy instruction, for which formal assessment tools are not readily available. Second, existing ESL/literacy tests were often too advanced for our beginning students. Third, existing tests are often patronizing and contradictory to a participatory approach. There are no readily available pre-packaged assessesment tools with a participatory perspective; in fact, by definition, participatory evaluation entails developing specific assessment tools for particular groups of learners. Yet development of context-specific tools is a challenging task, requiring both a basis of practice and specific training.

Thus, it became clear that issues of assessment had to be part of the training itself so that participants could develop tools appropriate for their own contexts. Interns didn't feel the need or desire to explore the issue of assessment in depth until they were comfortable with their own teaching and familiar with the learners. It wasn't until the end of the project that they expressed an interest in developing a systematic approach to using assessment tools; at that point, we did a training workshop on assessment and interns identified the types of tools that they would use in future work. Despite the lack of a uniform system of learner assessment, each site developed its own ways of assessing learners' progress; ongoing discussion of learners' growth was documented through project minutes, samples of student work, and a range of self-evaluation activities. The list on the following page illustrates some of the main ways that information about learner progress was documented through the course of day-to-day classroom interaction.

Tools for ongoing assessment of student progress

**Comparison of kinds of reading material at different points:* Master Teachers and interns noted at regular intervals what learners were able to read (from words to sentences to texts; the kind of text, and the length of text).

**Comparison of the quantity and quality of writing:* Although portfolios never fully took hold as a system for collecting and analyzing student writing, teachers kept track of changes in student writing by collecting samples of student work. For example, one intern xeroxed sequences of entries in her students' dialogue journals and analyzed changes in accuracy and quantity of writing. An ESL intern traced the changes in the use of verb tenses in his students' journals. Another intern gave each student a notebook to write his/her own words or sentences and collected them from time to time to see how they were progressing. Comparison of submissions to site publications at the end of each cycle also provided evidence of changes in group and individual writing proficiency.

**Contextualized tasks:* Students were asked to do specific tasks which would demonstrate their knowledge; for example, at the HMSC, one intern asked students to help make the attendance list (by writing their names, addresses and phone numbers); at the JMCS, ESL students were paired with someone from a different language background and asked to report back what they had learned about the other person. Games (eg. spelling bees, bingo) and skits were also used. Each of these tasks had a purpose other than assessment, but yielded assessment data.

**Informal observation:* Teachers did ongoing assessment by looking at students' homework and by noting their oral participation in class and responses to in-class activities. The development of both affective factors (self-confidence) and skills were noted in this way.

**Formal assessements:* Some teachers routinely integrated dictations, end-of-unit exercises or spelling tests. Some also used worksheet pages from a text (eg. Gouté Sel) as quizzes to see whether students were ready to go on to something new.

**Critical incidents:* Unexpected classroom events often revealed student progress. For example, when a new student joined the class, old ones realized how much they had learned; when an intern returned after observing another class for a month he saw great changes; when the site coordinator dropped into class and spontaneously asked students to read something on the spot, he was impressed with how well they could read. In one case, students identified spelling errors in a U.S. published Creole text, indicating the extent to which they had mastered the orthographic system.

Student self-evaluation: Student self-evaluation took a variety of forms.

-*Weekly evaluations:* In many classes, students did regular evaluations at the end of each week, indicating what they liked and disliked, what they had learned and wanted to learn.

-*Testimony:* In public meetings, students sometimes stood up and gave testimony about their progress; for example, in a site meeting about why Creole was being taught at the HMSC, one student spoke at length about how literacy had changed her life.

-*Reports to outside visitors:* Preparing for outside visitors was an occasion for students to reflect on what they had learned; they discussed how classes had affected their lives and then responded to questions by the outside researchers.

-*Class evaluations:* Class evaluation exercises were conducted during and at the end of cycles at each site. In some cases, they were written (eg. for ESL classes). In others, they were group discussions; Jean-Marc developed a set of guiding questions to facilitate class evaluation in the Creole component (see Appendix C); Ana developed a small group evaluation format to assess student learning in a multi-level ESL class.

-*Individual interviews:* In several classes, students were interviewed individually at the sites. Romeo, an intern at the HMSC, taped interviews with his students for a radio program about Creole literacy. These interviews served as an evaluation of learning and were adopted by others for end-of-cycle evaluations; interns found that asking students to speak into a recorder was less intimidating for beginning students than writing and also made the process somewhat more official/formal than unrecorded discussions. In general, the format for these interviews was quite simple. Byron used the following questions at the end of each cycle: *What do you think you learned last cycle? What was the most important thing you learned? How would you evaluate the program?* Romeo asked students: *What do you think about learning Creole? Why do you think so many people in Haiti have trouble reading and writing? What do you think about our classes here? If you compare yourself before you came to class and now, what is the difference?*

Anecdotes: Students often reported incidents reflecting new uses of literacy or ESL in their lives outside of class. They told stories about what had happened at home, at work, in their communities or with their children's schooling.

Categories of change in learners' literacy/ESL acquisition

This section presents a broad picture of the types of change in students' ESL and literacy proficiency and uses that were documented in our project. The overall progression from beginning literacy to more advanced literacy and beginning ESL has been discussed in the Teaching section; the way that these changes fit together and unfolded for a particular group of students is examined in Byron's account of the Spanish component.

Before analyzing specific changes in learners' proficiency and uses of ESL/literacy, it is important to note one general finding that emerged as we analyzed student progress. Over and over, we found that *the context for assessment shaped its outcomes:* what students could demonstrate about their knowledge or abilities depended on how they were evaluated. Thus, teachers found that many of their beginning literacy students could do very abstract, complex mathematical operations in their heads if the tasks were contextualized. If they were asked, "How much will it cost to buy seven pounds of potatoes if each pound is thirty cents?" they could respond immediately, but could not do the same operations on decontextualized paper and pencil tests or if asked to multiply seven times thirty.

Likewise, if writing tasks had a purpose, focusing on meaning and issues of substance (rather than on decontextualized skills, writing for the sake of writing, or formal accuracy), even the most beginning students could produce rich, substantive pieces (as the dialogue journal entries indicated); in addition, formal aspects of writing (spelling, grammar, etc.) became increasingly accurate. While students struggled with letter formation or spelling when they were presented as decontextualized word-level writing tasks, they were able to write substantially more in the context of a meaningful task (eg. very beginning Spanish literacy students could write several sentences about a compelling picture even though they didn't know the whole alphabet yet). ESL students who struggled with textbook exercises about reporting emergencies spoke with ease and eloquence when asked to discuss real emergencies that they experienced in their own lives (utilizing more complex grammar and vocabulary). Students who had difficulty with a textbook lesson about directions had little trouble giving directions when asked about real places they go to in their lives. Similarly, students' ability to read a passage depended on the content of the text rather than on a skill level inherent in the student. What they could read depended on the relationship between the text and their own lives. Thus, beginning ESL students at the HMSC eagerly read passages from Voices and the South African book (even though they were syntactically more complex than other texts that the same students found difficult) because they were so interested in them and familiar with the stories. These findings reinforce the notion that abstract claims about competence (eg. students' ability to give directions, to read paragraphs, etc.) assessed through 'objective' measures can be misleading. What students can do always depends on the context in which they are asked to demonstrate this competence.

In-class changes in reading and writing proficiency

Students demonstrated a variety of changes in both the quantity and quality of what they could read and write. In terms of **reading**, the general pattern of progression was from reading key words, to self-generated sentences, to sentences in a textbook, to longer passages in a textbook and teacher-generated passages, to authentic materials. Thus, after only three to four months of instruction, Byron reported that his students were able to read several short paragraphs from Cuentos de Lucha y Alegría, a book of Spanish stories published by New Readers Press. In both the Creole and the Spanish literacy classes, students who knew only a few of the letters of the alphabet when they started the project were able within about eight months to read authentic material (eg. an AIDS flyer, a healthy baby brochure, and a newspaper in Creole; a workplace rights flyer, and newspaper articles in Spanish). Again, what students could read depended on the extent to which it was meaningful to them; thus, for example, they had an easier time with articles from Voices than with linguistically simpler passages from an ESL text which had less meaning for them. Creole students with minimal exposure to English read the South African book with enthusiasm, because, as one student said, "All the book is my life."

Students' **writing** changed both in terms of what they wrote about (the content) and in terms of its accuracy (form). Often, students' first tendency was to see writing as primarily involving copying. The extent and rate at which this view changed depended a great deal on the interns'/teachers' conception of writing: students in classes where accuracy and spelling was stressed progressed more slowly; when interns or teachers stressed writing as making meaning, students wrote longer and more substantive pieces. Thus, for example, interns at Harborside had initially tended to focus on learning the alphabet before doing more substantive writing; when the second group of beginnners at Harborside started classes, however, the interns invited them to write their reactions to some pictures, even though they didn't know all the letters of the alphabet, and responded to the content of what students had written. The result was that each student was able to write several meaningful sentences about each picture. In letter-writing and writing for site magazines, students started by generating ideas and went through various phases of revision, thus moving toward a process approach to their writing.

Likewise, in many classes students went through several stages in the development of their journal writing. At first, they tended to use journals to take notes, or repeat whatever they had just learned in class. They then asked the teacher for topics or wrote generic pieces about their weekends. After a few weeks (or sometimes months), students began to write powerful pieces on self-selected topics about issues of importance to them (for example, difficulties finding work, fear of speaking in front of groups, the political situation in Haiti). Students got to the point where they said "NO" if the teacher-asked if they wanted him to suggest a topic. As interns and teachers responded to the content of students' writing, their entries not only became longer and more accurate, but took on greater force, with sentences like "The suffering in Haiti feels like the pain of delivering a child."

A clear indication of changes in Creole literacy students' writing proficiency can be seen in the kind of submissions to the site magazine. In the first issue after Creole classes started, the Master Teacher wrote a description of the Creole component; the next issue included several language experience stories written by groups of students; the subsequent issue included a few short sentences by individual students; more recently, issues have included a range of entries from Creole students ranging from sentences to paragraphs and page-long pieces.

As with reading, the range of genres or text-types that students were able to produce in writing proliferated during the course of the project. The progression from words to sentences to a range of genres is documented in Byron's account of the work of the Harborside. By the end of the project, students at the various sites had written journal entries, LEA stories, magazine articles, letters, and photo-stories. In some cases, students began to do personal expressive writing, bringing in pieces that they had done for their own purposes outside of class.

Metacognitive changes

In addition to changes in proficiency, students also underwent changes in the metacognitive aspects of their learning: like the interns, they became less preoccupied with form, corrections, mechanics and accuracy, and more concerned with expressing meaning as time went on. They began to value their own knowledge, experience and dialogue as integral aspects of learning. One reflection of this is the following excerpt in which students are describing their process of writing stories based on pictures they had taken.

> We got together in the class and studied everything that was in the picture. We chose what was important in the picture so that we could make a lesson because what comes from within us is better than anything else. We discussed the picture and the teacher wrote our words on the blackboard. What is important in that method is that it allows us all to participate in the work of the class.

Additional evidence of this change in students' thinking about learning came during an end-of-cycle interview when Byron asked a student to describe the most important thing he had learned. The student responded that when he had started class, he didn't think he would learn anything because of the non-formal approach (having discussions in class); however, he realized that he had thought this because he was used to a traditional approach. Byron reported that now (at the time of the interview), he feels that it is good that he has learned to analyze things and be more critical of what's going on around him. He said that this is the most important thing he learned because this is something that will stay with him.

Changes in classroom roles and participation

One of the main changes that interns and teachers noted was in their self-confidence and ability to contribute their ideas to class discussions. When they started classes, many students refused to write on the board or to draw because they thought it would reveal how elementary their skills were. If they were asked an opinion, they would often repeat whatever the person before them had said; it was difficult to draw out their ideas. As teachers and interns focused on their strengths and talked about learning, they became less afraid to make mistakes and take risks. Rather than seeing themselves as passive recipients of the teacher's knowledge, they began to take responsibility for and participate actively in generating classroom knowledge. Gradually they began to express their own opinions, to disagree with each other, and to respect each others' opinions. The most beginning literacy classes discussed sophisticated concepts (eg. causes of the Gulf War, the relationship between economics, power and literacy education). They began to bring in their own topics and ask the teacher/intern to discuss particular issues with them (the elections, the recession, etc.). They told their own proverbs, wrote them and discussed their meaning. Other indications of this growing confidence include: telling an intern to be on time for class, pointing out errors in textbooks, actively helping each other in class (rather than wanting all classwork to be geared to their individual needs or to emanate from the teacher).

Uses of literacy as a learning tool

As literacy students became more confident reading and writing their first language, they increasingly began to use their knowledge of literacy to support their English acquisition. For example, Spanish literacy students insisted that the teacher write all new English words on the board at the end of each ESL conversation class. Students also used the metalinguistic knowledge that they had gained in L1 literacy classes (their ability to talk about language and its functions) in supporting their acquisition of English. For example, because they had discussed pronoun use in Creole, one of Julio's students was able to explain the use of pronouns in English as follows, "You use 'she' if you want to talk about a woman but you don't want to repeat her name." Beginning ESL students were comfortable taking notes and reading ESL texts (like the book from South Africa) because of their literacy work.

Changes in roles and literacy uses outside of class

As students became more involved with their learning and experienced successes, they took on more responsibility in their sites. In several sites, students began to tutor other students. At Harborside, they conducted an open house for prospective students, and participated in recruitment; they were so successful that they doubled the number of students in six months by bringing in friends and relatives. Many students came to see the site as a second home, staying beyond class time to socialize, help or even, in some cases, to sit in on additional classes. In addition, many students took on new roles in their own communities. For

example, one student who could write only a few words when he started in the program at Harborside began taking minutes at his AA meeting after about six months of classes. He went to a state-wide convention and took notes so he could report back to his group. Many of the refugees in Creole classes participated actively in community events as a way to learn about the new culture, integrate themselves into Boston's Haitian community, and express support for democracy in Haiti.

A key change for students revolved around the ways their new literacy proficiency shaped **family relationships and interactions**. Although many students had mentioned the desire to be able to write letters to their families as a key goal, the impact of doing so went beyond the communicative functions of writing. Being able to write letters turned out to signify powerful changes in family relationships. One woman, for example, said that because she could read and write, her common-law husband proposed marriage to her (he no longer looked down on her because she was illiterate). Writing the first letter to a family member was an emotional experience, in many cases serving almost as an announcement of a new self. In one case, a student wrote her first letter to her husband and then put it on his pillow; he cried when he read it. Another woman wrote to her son who is an engineer for the first time (and then cried afterwards). Many students said that one of the most important changes in their lives was that they were no longer dependent on family members (or others) to read mail, documents and other official papers for them.

Students reported many ways that they could independently accomplish various **functional tasks** as a result of class participation. Some of these included: calling long-distance, calling 911, sorting and distributing mail to other household members; asking an American neighbor for help when locked out; listening to (and understanding!) the weather forecast on TV; going to the bank or grocery store independently. Several students got their driver's licenses (in one case, four out of five HMSC students who took the test passed it).

Again, being able to accomplish these tasks was important to students not just for their functional value, but because of the new sense of self-sufficiency they gained. Many students reported that one of the biggest changes in their lives was they no longer felt that they could be exploited as easily: for example, they could read documents like tax forms, daycare agreements and inheritance papers before signing them. They no longer had to depend on someone else to tell them what they were signing. As one student said, *"Now, if someone says $50.00 and you see $100.00, you can say 'No, that is not correct!'"*

Another domain where students applied what they learned to make changes in their lives was in the **workplace.** Many students reported having problems at work that resulted from their limited English. In some cases, they had to rely on others because they couldn't understand the boss: for example, one student said that when her boss had said, "You don't have to work tomorrow," someone had translated, "You have to work tomorrow." In other cases, students couldn't make themselves understood. One student, for example, had been working on Sundays for two years even though it was against his religion because he didn't know how to

refuse overtime. When he brought this problem to his teacher, the class practiced some simple phrases for refusing overtime, and he reported later that he had been able to tell his boss successfully, "I go to church Sunday. No overtime."

Summary and examples of changes in students' ESL/literacy proficiency and uses

In-class changes	Examples
Reading proficiency	
	quantity/length of text (letter identification, key words, sentences, paragraphs, stories, articles, books) diversification of genres (proverbs, LEA stories, news articles, forms, documents, brochures, student-written stories, etc.) conception of reading (focus on meaning rather than oral accuracy) ability to link texts to lives ability to respond to text
Writing proficiency	
	quantity of writing conception of writing (focus on meaning rather than form/accuracy) self-selection of topics development of voice process development (pre-writing, drafting, revision) diversification of genres and purposes (journals, letters, proverbs, writing for self-expression, writing for publication)
Metacognition	
	conceptions of literacy acquisition conceptions of teaching approach attitude toward dialogue/discussion
Classroom roles	
	contributions to class discussion willingness to take risks and make mistakes confidence
Use of literacy as a learning tool	
	use of literacy as a memory aid use of L1 literacy for L2 acquisition use of grammatical/metalinguistic knowledge for L2 acquisition

Out-of-class changes	Examples
Responsibilities at site	
	recruitment peer tutoring work on site publications
Roles in community	
	responsibilities in community organizations participation in community events
Family relationships	
	respect independence self-respect
Functional uses of ESL/ literacy	sorting mail driver's tests shopping, banking telephone use communication with neighbors reading documents
Workplace uses of ESL	
	understanding directions communicating needs

Impact of the project on the sites

In addition to training community literacy instructors and enhancing the ESL/literacy proficiency of adult learners, one of the objectives of the project was to increase the capacity of the sites to provide services. There are a number of ways in which the project achieved this objective.

First, in terms of actual **number of classes provided and students served**, the project significantly increased each site's capacity. The project enabled the HMSC to add seven new classes (taught by interns, the Master Teacher and former interns) and three new levels (beginning Creole, advanced Creole and transitional ESL) as well as weekly math literacy sessions, and, for a time, Drivers' Education classes. The JMCS had three new classes (taught by interns) and the Harborside had two new classes; both of the native language literacy sites were able to offer two levels of literacy classes by the end of the project. A total of 200 students per year were enrolled in project classes. As one of the Master Teachers said, the sites "got a lot of mileage out of the project."

Second, the project enabled the sites to serve **new populations of students**. In the case of the JMCS, the project allowed the site to reconnect with the Brazilian community in the Allston-Brighton area since two of the interns were Brazilian. Through an informal, word-of-mouth network, the Brazilian enrollment increased significantly while the interns worked there. At the HMSC, the Creole classes

enabled students who had previously been left on the waiting list (because there were no appropriate courses for them) to enroll. In addition, it provided suitable classes for students who had been stuck in Beginning ESL for several cycles (unable to progress because of literacy difficulties). In East Boston, a population of students who had never come to the Center because they felt unprepared for ESL now became part of the learner population.

Third, in the case of the HMSC and Harborside, the project was instrumental in supporting the sites' goals of **institutionalizing native language literacy instruction.** By the second year of the project, the Creole component had become fully integrated into the regular course offerings and had lost its stigma in the wider community of the site, as well as in the greater Boston Haitian community (this, of course, was due not just to the work of the project, but to the ongoing work of the site initiated prior to the project, as well as to the changing political situation in Haiti). On the one hand, project staff brought issues about literacy, and native language literacy in particular, to the community through radio shows and newspaper articles: one intern produced a show in which his students were interviewed about the role of literacy in their lives; another intern was a founder of a Boston-area Creole language newspaper; a Mentor wrote an article about Paulo Freire's work for a Haitian community newspaper. On the other hand, articles about the work of the HMSC increased its profile and strengthened its ties to the community. At Harborside, the Spanish literacy component, although still small, became a site priority in subsequent funding requests.

The project also enabled the sites to **respond to community needs**. When the HMSC was asked to provide educational services for over a hundred Haitian refugees from Guantanamo (most of whom had little prior education), the Center already had an appropriate literacy component in place and a group of teachers trained to teach it; it was able to respond to this demand on short notice. When a local hospital wanted to start a new ESL program for its staff, it hired interns from the JMCS to staff this new program.

Further, the project supported the sites' goal of **staff diversification** and **community leadership development**. In a context where there was considerable local and state attention to multi-culturalism and diversity, the project was one of the few concrete initiatives to make these goals a reality. At the HMSC, every intern who successfully completed the training was hired onto the staff of the site in some capacity; three were promoted from support to teaching positions. At the JMCS, all four of the interns were former students from the site; each of them was subsequently hired by the site. In addition, one of the interns trained by the project was later hired as a Mentor Teacher for the Spanish literacy component at Harborside. Similarly, the interns at Harborside continued their work at the site after the end of the project, first as volunteers and later as participants in a subsequent literacy project. Further, in some cases, site teachers who were not part of the project itself benefited from its work by participating in workshops and learning about the innovative practices being implemented in project classes. For

example, the project-sponsored workshops on Creole linguistics were open to the entire staff of the HMSC and attended by many non-project participants. At times, teachers who were not from the cultural group of the learners came to the project teacher-sharing meetings to discuss problems they were having in their classes, gain a better understanding of the dynamics or seek advice.

The sites also identified the **enhancement of the the quality of instruction** as a benefit of the project. According to Jean-Marc Jean-Baptiste, the Director of the HMSC, the shift away from a mechanical approach meant that students became more involved in classes. He said that in the prior approach, based on sound-symbol correspondences, teaching seemed to be dry and uncomfortable; the new approach, with its connection between students' reality and teaching reading and writing, made teaching more comfortable for both students and teachers. One indication of the impact of the enhanced quality of instruction was the fact that student retention was very high in project classes; although we do not have complete figures for every class throughout the three year life of the project (due to the fact that record-keeping systems for the new components were not fully in place until late in the project), teachers reported high retention in virtually almost all project classes. Ana said that the project was one of the most helpful things that had been done in a few years for the ESL department at the JMCS. She specifically mentioned the participatory way that the project itself was conducted as a factor in its impact:

> I also think that the way we did it, the participatory approach, - I think it was good to go through that - having so many parties involved, really trying to be as participatory as you can be with so many people from so many different places and still coming out alive. I also think that the University played a very vital role. Regarding what I would expect them to do, this was a much better set up. I think the trust the University gave the Centers was vital to the succes of the project. I think by the Centers being able to have their own curriculum, to do the trainings the way they are used to doing it, by giving that kind of trust to the real people, the real work - I think [the University staff] showed that they believe in participation. At least for me that is one of the best things that can happen.

Ana's comments here point to another way in which the project supported the development of site capacity - by facilitating **collaboration and networking between sites**. This collaborative work took place on the instructional level, in terms of cross-fertilization between classes and teachers. For example, largely inspired by the magazines produced at the HMSC and JMCS, the teachers at Harborside decided to produce their own site newspaper. Teachers from one site

adapted materials and activities from another for their students. In addition, the project provided an ongoing (yet informal) context for site coordinators to meet on a regular basis to share concerns and address program-based issues; the sites worked together to develop funding proposals and to develop strategies for promoting native language literacy instruction.

Finally, the project contributed to bringing national attention to the sites, which, in turn, was beneficial to them in seeking further funding to build capacity and expand services. Largely because of its work to develop Creole literacy instruction, the HMSC was chosen to be part of three federally-funded studies: the National English Literacy Demonstration Program for Adults of Limited English Proficiency (conducted by Aguirre International), a videotape project of promising practices in literacy instruction, and a study of biliteracy (both conducted by the National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education of the Center for Applied Linguistics - NCLE/CAL). In addition, the Master Teacher of the Harborside Spanish literacy component was invited to participate in a national biliteracy roundtable forum in Washington, DC, sponsored by NCLE/CAL and in a Spanish literacy working group sponsored by the Literacy Assistance Center in NYC.

Impact of the project on the field of adult native language and ESL literacy

In addition to increasing the sites' capacity on a local level, the project contributed to the development of the field as a whole through conference presentations, the publication of articles, the development of curriculum materials, and participation in national research studies. The dissemination work is significant not just in terms of its contributions to the knowledge base of the field, but also because it is a model for diversification of the profession. In many cases, project members were the only non-white or non-Anglo North American presenters at conferences. In addition to participation in conferences, project members also wrote about their work, thus contributing multi-cultural perspectives to the literature of the field (eg. Byron Barahona wrote about the development of the Spanish literacy component at Harborside; Julio Midy and Marilyn St. Hilaire wrote about the development of the Creole component for the NCLE/CAL report).

Conference presentations:

July, 1990	**Teaching and Learning Strategies for Working with Non-Literate Adults with a Special Focus on Native Language Literacy,** SABES and UMass/Amherst, Haverhill, MA
October, 1990	**Literacy 2000 Conference,** Douglas College, New Westminster (Vancouver), British Columbia

January, 1991	**Biliteracy : Theory and Practice Colloquium**, NCLE/CAL, Washington, DC
March, 1991	**TESOL Convention**, New York, NY
May, 1991	**Spanish Literacy Conference**, Literacy Assistance Center, New York, NY
October, 1991	**MATSOL Fall Conference**, Keynote Address, Boston, MA
November, 1991	**Network '91 Conference**, Marlborough, MA
December, 1991	**Challenging Education, Creating Alliances: An Institute in Honor of Paulo Freire's 70th Birthday,** New York, NY
Spring, 1992	**Student-generated materials development workshop,** Adult Literacy Resource Institute and SABES, Boston, MA
March, 1992	**MATSOL Spring Conference**, Newton, MA
August, 1992	**Native Language Literacy Working Group**, NCLE/CAL, Washington, DC
April, 1993	**TESOL Convention**, Atlanta, GA

Publications which either focus on or include sections about the project include:

Auerbach, E. 1990. Moving On: From Learner to Teacher. Literacy 2000: Make the Next Ten Years Matter: Conference Summary. New Westminster, BC: Douglas College.

Auerbach, E. 1993. Re-examining English Only in the ESL Classroom. TESOL Quarterly (in press).

Gillespie, M. and E. Ballering. Adult Native Language Literacy: A Synthesis and Plan for Research and Action. Washington, DC: NCLE/CAL.

Wrigley, H. S. and G. Guth. 1992. Bringing Literacy to Life: Issues and Options in Adult ESL Literacy. San Mateo, CA: Aguirre International.

Jackson-Mann interns receiving their certificates after completing the training program

Julio and Marilyn with Paulo Freire at the conference to celebrate his 70th birthday in New York City

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Curriculum materials

Two publications were produced by the HMSC literacy component which can be utilized by other Haitian Creole literacy projects nationally:

Lavi Kami Maslen - a photostory about the life of a Haitian man in the U.S.

Pwovèb lakay se sajès popilè - a proverb book for initial Haitian Creole literacy

National Demonstration and Dissemination Projects:

A further indication of the national impact of the project can been seen in the fact that the work of the Creole component at the HMSC has been featured in three national studies:

National English Literacy Demonstration Program for Adults of Limited English Proficiency conducted by Aguirre International (funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education).

Videotape Project of promising practices in adult literacy instruction conducted by the National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education of the Center for Applied Linguistics (NCLE/CAL).

Mother Tongue and ESL Literacy: A Synthesis and Plan for Further Research conducted by NCLE/CAL (funded by the National Center on Adult Literacy).

"...the best of a wide spectrum of...demonstration programs..."

Perhaps the strongest indication of the impact of the project on the adult literacy field nationally is the fact that a new project, entitled Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy, based on the model developed by the BCLTP, was selected by the National Institute for Literacy as one of 36 projects nationwide to be funded as a demonstration program. These projects were chosen, according to Franmarie Kennedy-Keel, Institute Interim Director, because they represent the "best of a wide spectrum of literacy research and demonstration programs... [and will] serve as models for the national effort to fight illiteracy."[1]

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[1] Quoted in Literacy News: A Publication of the National Institute for Literacy, Vol. I, No. 6, Oct. 1992.

Chapter Seven: Implications and Recommendations

The findings of our project confirm that it is a powerful and promising model for addressing the needs of the growing population of undereducated language minority adults. In the section on the rationale for the project, we outlined three significant aspects of the model: 1) provision of L1 literacy instruction for adults with minimal prior educational background; 2) implementation of a participatory approach to curriculum development; and 3) training of interns from the communities of the learners as literacy instructors in their own communities. Our project confirmed the findings of other studies suggesting that each of these are productive strategies for promoting literacy development among immigrant and refugee adults. Our hope is that this model, each of whose aspects are widely used in many countries of the world, will also be adopted more widely in the United States. This project suggests that such a model has the potential of making a significant impact on both the quantity and the quality of services provided for the rapidly increasing number of non-English speaking adults in the U.S. At the same time, the effectiveness of implementation of this model will depend to a large extent on the allocation of adequate resources. In the remainder of the chapter we will examine various aspects of our project in terms of their strengths and promises, challenges or problems, and our recommendations for successful replication.

Implications for for L1 literacy

Strengths

Our project indicated that provision of L1 literacy services addresses the needs of previously unserved populations, is effective in developing the basis for ESL acquisition for adults who are minimally literate in their L1, contributes to individual and community empowerment, and supports learners' cognitive development.

**L1 literacy provision addresses the needs of previously underserved or unserved learners:* According to the Director of the HMSC, offering literacy instruction in the L had the following results: 1) People who were not progressing before are now progressing; 2) the site is now able to serve new students that it was not able to serve before; and 3) people who left the center because they couldn't progress in ESL classes have returned. In East Boston, likewise, learners were largely people who had quit other programs because their needs were not met or people who had never attended adult education classes before because they were intimidated by their own lack of prior schooling/literacy.

L1 instruction is critical for the transition to ESL: The project demonstrated that students with minimal L1 literacy can, after about a year of L1 literacy instruction, successfully make the transition to beginning ESL. It further found that a bilingual transitional ESL class can be a significant support for this transition. It is critical to stress, however, that there may be a great deal of individual variation in the actual amount of time needed in L1 literacy classes; the rate of literacy acquisition and readiness for ESL depends on a range of background factors including the learner's prior educational experience, age, exposure to non-L1 communities, etc.

L1 literacy can contribute significantly to individual and community empowerment: L1 literacy acquisition allowed learners to meet many personal goals (ability to write letters to family members, use literacy at work, participate in community organizations, etc.), as well as gain an increased sense of self-confidence and independence. Quite simply, it made them feel better about themselves and their own capacities. At the same time, it enhanced the sense of community cultural pride; the institutionalization of the Creole component at the HMSC, for example, supported the destigmatization of Creole; learners no longer felt that they were categorized as ignorant or low class.

L1 literacy supports learners' cognitive development: Through the context of L1 literacy classes, participants were able to engage in dialogue about socially significant issues in their own lives (eg. political developments in Haiti, workplace rights, AIDS) which they would not have been able to address in ESL classes (due to language limitations). Through this meaningful contextualization of literacy acquisition, they were able to become active participants in dialogue, develop critical thinking skills, and link their classwork to issues outside the classroom.

Difficulties and challenges

Precisely because the L1 literacy classes were so successful, new challenges emerged: As beginning students progressed, there were demands for additional courses and spaces in existing courses; in addition, expanded resources to support the proliferation of courses and increased numbers of students were required; further the project entailed additional administrative responsibilities for the sites which were not adequately supported by the project itself.

The need for additional course offerings: As students came closer to being ready for ESL, transitional bilingual ESL classes became necessary to bridge their L1 and L2 learning experiences. Once they were confident enough to enter beginning ESL classes, existing classes had to accomodate them in addition to the students already on waiting lists. The result, in many cases, was a logjam or bottleneck. In addition, rather than reducing the waiting lists, the program was so successful that the waiting list actually increased as more and more students realized that their educational needs could now be met. Thus, the project engendered the proliferationof classes (with project students in beginning and advanced L1 literacy, transitional bilingual ESL, and beginning ESL classes by the end of the project).

The lack of ongoing support for L1 literacy and its spin-offs: Although the project was able to initiate a number of new transitional classes in the sites within L1 components, finding support for this proliferation of classes once the project ended was a challenge. In addition, there were not enough spaces for literacy students once they became ready for beginning ESL classes. Thus a whole new set of demands for the site was engendered by the success of the project which the project itself did not address. The political climate is such that funding for L1 literacy classes is an uphill battle: the English-Only atmosphere, on the one hand, means that it is difficult to secure support for L1 instruction, and the priority placed on quick job placements, on the other, means that it is difficult to find support for the lowest level students (who take the longest time to be employable).

The increased administrative burden for the sites: Institutionalizing the L1 literacy components at the sites entailed additional administrative responsibilities: however, since the project was primarily a training project (rather than a service delivery project), it was unclear into whose domain these responsibilities fell. While the training engendered substantial administrative tasks accompanying the additional services, there was no provision for funding this administration of services in the grant.

Recommendations

L1 literacy instruction should become a regular, institutionalized option in adult education settings: The work of our project suggests that it is critical to ensure the provision of L1 literacy services for adult immigrants and refugees with limited prior educational experience. Without it, these adults will have little chance of accessing ESL services and the accompanying benefits in terms of employment, community and family participation. At the same time, however, service delivery models need to be flexible and tailored to the changing needs of sites: this means that there may be different course offerings and schedules at each site depending on circumstances and that the offerings may change over time within a site as student and community needs change, the number of students ready for ESL increases, etc.

Funding for L1 literacy should be increased and institutionalized: Pilot or demonstration programs can only be as successful as their follow-up. Policy makers must be commited not only to supporting innovative pilots, but to advocating for their continued implementation. The stability of programming is necessary not just from an institutional perspective, but also for the sake of students: unless there is continuity of service provision, the gains that they make in literacy classes will be lost. In addition, stability and continuity of programming is necessary for research purposes: without long-term services, it will be impossible to seriously evaluate the impact of various instructional options.

Implications for curriculum development

Strengths

Participatory curriculum development is a particularly powerful model for newly literate adults because it connects their life concerns with literacy acquisition. A meaning-based approach to literacy acquisition allows learners to move relatively quickly toward using and producing texts for their own purposes and in their lives.

**Participatory curriculum development is a powerful model for adult learners:* Work in our project suggests that a particpatory approach is appropriate for adult literacy and ESL students: very often, they are immersed in critical life struggles, the struggles of adjusting to a new culture, separation from families, preoccupation with the political situation in the home countries, trying to find work, etc. Rather than seeing these preoccupations as obstacles to learning, the participtory approach allows learners to focus on them as part of learning. Because the acquisition of skills is contextualized, older learners are less frustrated with limitations of memory or skill, and more engaged with content. They can draw on their own experiences, contribute to their own learning, use literacy to accomplish their own purposes, and explore issues of importance to them (eg. the political situation in Haiti).

**Meaning-based instruction facilitates literacy acquisition:* Work with our classes confirms studies which find that when the emphasis on learning focuses on meaning rather than form, students learn rapidly. Most beginning students in our classes who knew only a few letters of the alphabet when they enrolled were able to write sentences about pictures, journal entries, language experience stories, letters to relatives, etc. and to read authentic texts after relatively short periods of time.

Difficulties and challenges

A participatory approach is time-consuming and requires skill to implement. In addtion, the lack of readily available materials to use as resources intensifies the challenge. These challenges demand substantial preparation time and support.

**The time-consuming nature of participatory curriculum development:* The strengths of a participatory approach are also what makes it particularly challenging; precisely because tthe curriculum is tailored to each group, and emerges from a particular context, its implementation demands a great deal of time and skill. For people who are just learning to teach, this can be especially challenging.

**The lack of resources and materials:* The challenges are compounded by the fact that, for L1 literacy instruction, teachers are in many cases, treading on new ground. Where ESL teachers may be able to draw on existing materials, integrating them in a context-specific way into a participatory process, L1 teachers often have to start completely from scratch. Existing materials are few and far between, and often not geared to a North American context.

The inadequacy of preparation time and support: In our project, as interns took on increasingly greater teaching responsibilities, they had less meeting time (since their paid time was fixed). They needed additional time, not only to prepare classes, but to discuss how to implement a participatory approach and to develop materials. Finally, due to time limitations, teachers and interns were unable to participate in documenting the evolution of the participatory process, with the result that subsequent groups will be less able to benefit from their experiences.

Recommendations

Training opportunities for participatory curriculum development need to be expanded so that it can become more widely implemented in adult education programs. While participatory curriculum development is a powerful approach to teaching adult literact, there is relatively little ongoing teacher preparation available for it. TESOL programs should institutionalize course offerings for prospective teachers to prepare them for the influx of adult learners with little prior educational background.

Teacher-learners need support and paid time for participatory curriculum development. Teacher-sharing meetings should become institutionalized as a regular part of job descriptions. In addition, teachers should be adequately paid for planning and materials preparation time.

Site-based Curriculum Specialists should be hired for L1 literacy programs: While all sites would benefit greatly from having site-based Curriculum Specialists who could assist in materials collection and development, they are particulary important in L1 literacy programs where few existing materials and resources are available. One of the responsibilities of Curriculum Specialists should be to develop Curriculum Tool Kits which include teacher- and learner-generated materials as well as authentic materials on a variety of topics; these Tool Kits can then become resources from which new (and experienced) can draw. Once a greater body of knowledge/materials is available, the role of curriculum specialist may become less necessary.

Opportunties for networking between sites should be enhanced: Since many L1 literacy programs operate in isolation, often re-inventing the wheel with little common knowledge of resources or strategies, funders should support networking between sites doing similar work. This sharing of ideas can go a long way toward building the knowledge base in adult ESL and L1 literacy.

Funding should be allocated for native language curriculum development: In order to address new teachers' need for curriculum materials (so that they don't have to start from scratch), funders should support curriculum development projects for key languages with large non-literate adult populations in the U.S. (eg. Haitian Creole, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hmong, etc.).

Implications for community literacy instructors

Strengths

One of the most promising findings in our project was the effectiveness of community-based literacy teachers, both for L1 and for ESL instruction. They represent a significant untapped resource for serving the huge numbers of immigrants and refugees in need of adult education services. Our project suggests that opening the professional ranks to include them may significantly increase both the quantity and quality of available services. In addition, such a model has enormous benefits both for those being trained as instructors and for the field of adult literacy as a whole.

**Community teachers are particularly effective because of their life experiences and cultural resources:* Recent research on literacy pedagogy indicates that teachers must be aware of culture-specific discourse practices and literacy uses. It also indicates that shared background knowledge with learners, as well as the ability to create an atmosphere of trust are key qualifications of adult educators. We found that community-based instructors (both teachers and interns), were particularly suited to identifying issues, building trust, and linking literacy with community issues.

**Teachers from the communities of the learners are effective not only for L1 literacy instruction, but for ESL instruction as well:* While a commonly-held assumption is that ESL teachers should be native speakers of English, our experience was that the immigrant/refugee teachers could be effective teachers in both transitional ESL classes (where they shared the learners' lst language) and in mixed ESL classes (where participants came from a variety of language backgrounds). Any non-native aspects of teachers' linguistic systems (eg. phonology, syntax, etc.) were more than compensated for by strengths: the commonalities of experience between community teachers and learners promoted an atmosphere of empathy and trust as well as enhancing the relevance of curriculum content.

**The training of community-based interns is a cost-effective way to address increasing demands on the adult education system:* The apprenticeship model in which a Mentor or Master Teacher trains several interns can greatly increase the number of students receiving services without a proportionate increase in cost. As one of the Master Teachers said, her impact is multiplied by five. During the last year of our project alone, 200 students were served who would not other-wise have received services. The potential impact is even greater: if only half of those trained in our project actually teach two classes per year for the next five years, over two thousand additional students will have the opportunity to attend classes.

**In addition to addressing learners' needs, the model has enormous benefits for the interns themselves:* Many of the interns in our project were underemployed before joining the project: they were delivering pizzas, working on assembly lines, cleaning houses, etc. even though, in many cases, they had professional jobs and higher education in their home countries. This model offers the opportunity for people with otherwise underutilized skills to become resources for community

development, as well as giving them a way out of the menial jobs to which they have been relegated. As a result of the project, many interns have moved on to higher education and jobs in teaching or community service.

**Community teachers contribute to the development of the field of adult literacy:* Because of the background and experiences they share with adult learners, community teachers can provide insights into the concerns, needs, and learning processes of learners. Not only can the field learn from their perspective, but they can contribute to the much-needed cultural diversification of the field.

Difficulties and challenges

Because community teacher-learners are making several transitions at once, their jobs are particularly challenging. It is important not to overburden them with new responsibilties or underpay them for the tasks they take on.

**The multi-faceted demands of becoming a teacher:* The transition to teaching involves changes on many fronts for interns - becoming comfortable with the role of teacher, revising their own notions of education, learning to implement teaching processes, becoming familiar with resources, generating materials and lesson-plans, etc. The rate at which interns are ready to take on new responsibilities is variable and uneven, which may cause logistical problems or tensions between interns.

**Lack of adequate paid time to carry out responsibilities:* Interns received stipends for a fixed number of hours per week; yet, as they progressed, their responsibilities also increased, particularly at the point when they began to teach independently. They then had all the responsibilities of regular teachers (planning, materials development, teaching) in addition to training meetings, workshops, conference presentations, and, in some cases, additional site tasks (assisting with recruitment, work on the site magazine, etc.). In many cases, this meant additional hours of work for the same pay. The result was a somewhat exploitative situation.

Recommendations

**Training opportunities for people from the communities of adult learners should be expanded:* Community teachers are an untapped resource with significant potential to address the growing need for ESL/literacy services. Resources should be made available to replicate the model so that communities and interns can benefit.

**The ranks of the ESL profession opened to include more people from the communities of the learners:* Whether or not community teachers share the first language of learners, their common experiences are a significant resource which can more than compensate for non-native speaker status (given a certain threshold of ESL competence). The myth that native-speakers of English are the best ESL teachers must be re-examined.

**Expectations of interns should be reasonable and flexible:* Because interns come with different backgrounds and develop at different rates, responsibilities should be increased as each intern is ready for them, rather than according to a rigid timeline.

**New job categories should be created and job qualifications revised to ensure that the resources of community people can be utilized in adult education:* The traditional notion of hiring only teachers with college degrees and/or certification must be re-examined because it excludes people who have much to contribute to the field. Specifically, job categories for community instructors should be created so that people who have received literacy training like that provided in the project will have a career path open to them upon completion of training. In addition, qualifications such as familiarity with the cultural and linguistic backgrounds, life experiences and community issues of learners should be given equal or greater consideration as formal credentialing in hiring adult ESL/literacy teachers.

**Teacher-learners should receive adequate compensation for the services they render:* In future projects, the pay structure for interns should reflect actual responsibilities and take into account variability as interns increase their workload. As interns become more experienced, their pay should be on a par with teachers who do similar or equal work.

Implications for training

Strengths

Our project indicated that a participatory, inquiry-based model for training literacy instructors is both effective and empowering for participants. Combining observation, mentoring, workshops, and teacher-sharing meetings allowed a range of contexts for developing teaching competence and for addressing teaching issues.

**The participatory training model encouraged teacher-learners to become problem-posers and researchers of their own classrooms:* Because the workshops modeled a participatory process, rather than transmitting skills or techniques, interns learned to investigate the issues and dynamics of their own teaching contexts and develop context-specific instructional strategies. They moved toward valuing active learning for themselves as well as their students. Interns learned to be creative in responding to student needs and generating lessons/materials; they developed a stance of critical inquiry in addressing classroom problems.

**Observation, mentoring, training workshops, and teacher-sharing meetings complement each other in supporting the development of teacher-learners:* Providing a range of training contexts allows interns to see, participate in, and discuss teaching. They can move back and forth between theory and practice, between participation and critical reflection. Observation gives them a sense of the reality of classroom life; mentors can both serve as models and offer feedback to interns about their own teaching; workshops can present and model approaches, as well as providing a context for exchanging ideas; teacher-sharing can promote a problem-posing stance toward practice and allow for peer exchanges. None of these in themselves would have been as effective as the combination proved to be.

Difficulties and challenges

There were both substantive and logistical difficulties in implementing the training model. The former stemmed from interns' expectations and internalized notions of education. The latter revolved around variability in individual and site-based backgrounds and needs.

**Uneven responses to a participatory, learner-centered approach:* In some cases, interns' prior educational experiences caused them to be uncomfortable with a participatory approach - they expected to teach and be taught in the ways they themselves had learned, which may have been quite traditional. Thus, they wanted the training to provide them with techniques and tended to rely on mechanical approaches in their own teaching. The rate and extent of change from a teacher- to a learner-centered approach was uneven.

**Uneven transition between workshops and practice:* Even when participants seemed very engaged in workshop activities, they did not always transfer them to their own teaching contexts. Some interns consistently tried out what they had learned while others did not.

**Logistical constraints on the ten-month training cycle:* Interns entered and left the project at different points which did not correspond to the anticipated ten-month training cycle. Although one group of interns started together in the first training group, they left at different times and new interns entered on a revolving basis, making it difficult to integrate new interns into ongoing training. Because participation in the project was not a 'real' job (only ten hours a week), some interns dropped out before their ten months were completed because of job changes, or getting much-needed fulltime jobs that conflicted with training/teaching time.

**Impracticality of pre-determined observation, co-teaching and independent teaching progression:* Although the original proposal stipulated three month segments of observing, co-teaching and teaching independently, this sequence did not correspond to the realities of participants' needs and backgrounds. They started with various experiences (some having already taught for many years or volunteered in Master Teachers' classes) and were ready to teach at different points (some needing minimal observation time and others being reluctant to teach independently even after six months in a Master Teacher's class).

**Impracticality of ten-month limit on project participation:* Although the grant mandated that interns leave the project after ten months, this stipulation meant in practice that just when interns were becoming experienced and comfortable, they were terminated and replaced with new interns.

**Lack of follow-up once interns left the project:* Although many interns were hired as literacy instructors upon completion of the project, many others left with little continued contact with the project. There was no system to place them once they've been trained and, in many cases, no money to hire them to do the work for which they had been trained.

Recommendations

Training should include specific exploration of mechanical approaches to literacy as a basis for comparison with participatory approaches: One way to address the discomfort with participatory models is to invite participants to try teaching in both ways and to compare results. Promoting only one approach without evaluating the other may not be effective in demonstrating their differences. In addition, increasing peer observation opportunities may diminish the demand for training in methods or techniques.

Training should include explicit strategies to support the transition from workshops to classroom practice: Workshops themselves should incorporate planning time so that participants can explore how they may want to apply what they have learned. More site-based follow-up to trainings should be built in, including: structured discussions of workshops at site meetings, site-based workshops dealing with site-specific issues, and more peer observation (so that interns can see how others apply what they have learned).

The transition from training to teaching should to be flexible and context specific: In place of a uniform ten-month cycle divided into three segments of observation, supervised co-teaching, and independent teaching, interns should assume greater responsibilities as they are ready and comfortable with them.

Project participation should not be limited to ten-months: Participants should be able to continue working with the project in an organic way, according to the needs of both the site and the individual in order to avoid a revolving door syndrome in which interns must leave as soon as they are trained to make way for new interns.

Project objectives should include follow-up of interns: Interns should be assisted with finding jobs and be invited to continue to collaborate with the project. Where possible, grant proposals should request funding to hire trained interns for a specified duration upon completion of training.

Implications for collaboration

Strengths

One of the positive and unexpected outcomes of the project was the cross-fertilization that occured as a result of collaboration between sites. This was a benefit for participating teachers, administrators and for the sites themselves.

Collaboration gave participants the chance to work with colleagues from other programs on substantive (not just bureaucratic) issues: Whereas site representatives usually only have the chance to meet with each other to discuss administrative issues (eg. to hear about requirements from funding agencies), this collaboration provided an ongoing context for dialogue about programming, curriculum development, long-term planning and policy priorities.

The participatory nature of internal project administration enhanced the collaboration: Internally, in terms of staff decision-making and project

administration, the fact that university and site personnel worked together in a participatory way was empowering for the project staff. The fact that the project coordinator tried to implement a 'collaboration without control' model of project functioning supported sites' sense of ownership and autonomy in the project. Because staff issues were dealt with in the same way that training and teaching issues were, the collaboration seemed genuine most of the time.

Difficulties and challenges

The dual administrative structure of the project yielded tensions at certain times. In some cases, the needs of the sites came into conflict with the aims of the project, and, the Master Teachers were caught between these conflicting demands.

**The sites' needs to provide service sometimes conflicted with the project's need to focus on training:* Because of long waiting lists, the sites often wanted interns to take on their own classes as quickly as possible, while from the perspective of the project, interns could have benefited from additional time working with Master Teachers.

**The added administrative requirements of new components were not clearly defined or delegated, leading to unclarity:* In sites where the project funded a new component, there was some contention over who was responsible for administrative tasks associated with it. Site coordinators often expected the project to take on these responsibilities, although they had not clearly been defined as part of their job descriptions. Master Teachers faced various challenges because of the duality of their roles as both project and site staff.

Recommendations

**Funders should support networking between projects doing related work:* Collaboration and networking are powerful ways to address shared concerns and push forward the knowledge base of the field. It can help to overcome the 're-inventing the wheel' syndrome and allow for the pooling of resources and experiences. In the case of pioneering work (such as native language literacy) the need for a forum for dialogue is all the greater; funding must be allocated not only to support local collaborations, but to support national conferences where native language adult literacy practitioners can meet to discuss their work.

**Project staff should have paid time to attend site (as opposed to project) meetings:* Job descriptions of site-based Master Teachers should include participation in site meetings to ensure adequate communication between the project and the site.

**Administration of site-based project responsibilities should be clearly delineated:* Adequate paid time to administer services funded by the project should be included in the job description of either a Project staff member or a site staff member.

Conclusion

As we confront dramatic changes in the demographics for the twenty-first century, we need to find equally dramatic new ways to address the increased demands for adult literacy and ESL provision. Hopefully, this report has shown that the model developed by the Bilingual Community Literacy Project has the potential to be one such approach. Each of its aspects - first language literacy instruction, participatory curriculum development, and the training of community literacy instructors - breaks relatively new ground within a North American adult literacy context. It is a model that is cost-effective, promotes leadership from within language minority communities, provides effective services for underserved populations, and opens career opportunities for immigrants and refugees. In many ways, the work of the project exemplifies the community service internship model being promoted by the current administration.

At the same time, however, despite all of these promising features, we have been confronted with substantial obstacles in implementing and institutionalizing this model. The single biggest obstacle, not only to our efforts, but across the board in literacy provision for adult immigrants and refugees, is inadequate and unstable funding. In the case of our own project, once the question of finding funding to continue our work after the end of the grant loomed in third year of the project, more than fifty percent of our staff meeting time was devoted to getting the work of the project institutionalized. Even after submitting numerous proposals to a range of public and private sources, getting assurances of commitment to the model, and meeting with representatives of the State Department of Education who supported the principles of the project verbally, we were able to secure only limited funding to continue the work started in this project. While federal agencies encourage seeking state funding, community-based agencies have difficulty getting new state money during a period of budget cutbacks. In a political climate where a great deal of lip service is paid to cultural diversity and to 'breaking the cycle of illiteracy,' obstacles to institutionalizing services for immigrants and refugees continue to be enormous, and efforts to secure funding are so time-consuming that they take away from the actual delivery of services. The constant cycle of developing innovative and effective projects, attempting to get them institutionalized or watch them go out of existence, only to be replaced by new innovative projects which may suffer the same fate, does little to support the field or those in need of services. While it is clearly important to promote innovative demonstration projects, it is equally important to make commitments to their institutionalization. In the case of the BCLTP model, this entails future commitments to stable, ongoing funding for native language literacy, for participatory curriculum development and for the training and hiring of community literacy teachers.

In ending this report, it is important to keep in mind not only the challenges facing the field, but also the significance the project has had for participants. As Felipe Vaquerano, one of the interns who was hired as a Mentor in the subsequent project, said, "I see this project as a way of opening doors. For me, I wanted to go to college but I couldn't [for financial reasons] - I didn't want to work in a factory forever. Without the BCLTP, I would still be working in a factory. The project got me where I am now." It is fitting to end with the following poem that he wrote after a few months in the project:

"THANK YOU"

As time passes by and life goes on,
As long as we are alive,
As long as our goals seem to be hidden,
As long as our hopes are not finished,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as we stay awake
To see Today's sunset and Tomorrow's sunrise,
As long as we remember what we've done
And what we want to do,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as there is someone to hold on,
As long as we can get up from a failure,
As long as somebody believes in us,
As long as we can show who we are,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as people like you exist
It is going to be difficult to fall;
Because you're the person we can count on
To encourage us to struggle to survive.

Thank you for supporting us,
In our long-long walk,
For sharing your knowledge with us
For being who you are.

Thank you again and good luck!

Ediana, Estela, (Felipe), Laudize

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Appendix A: Description and Evaluation of Training Workshops

Please note: Both the objectives and the reflections in the following workshop descriptions were written retrospectively, based on minutes of our core staff meetings. Each session ended with a brief evaluation (which is not listed in every outline since it was a 'routine'); in addition, there was another evaluation discussion at each site during the week or two following the workshop. The reflections incorporate feedback from these evaluations. Please also note that we rotated facilitators for each activity within a session; hence, the term facilitator refers to different people. Although there were too many workshop handouts to include here, a few samples are presented.

Session I: Conceptual Framework (Feb. 1991)

Objectives

The primary task during the first session is to set the tone for the trainings, and to present an introduction to the participatory approach; our objectives were:

- *to set a participatory tone, conveying to interns that the training is as much theirs as ours
- *to get to know each other: elicit from interns their interest in the project, their backgrounds and preliminary perceptions of needs.
- *to introduce a participatory approach, especially the idea of non-formal education and non-traditional student-teacher relations
- *to set a direction for future trainings: giving a sense of what we hope to achieve and how we will proceed
- *to model a concrete tool or activity that interns can try with students
- *to present the oonceptual framework and situate the project in a broader context

Overview of the session

1. Welcome in 3 languages; explanation of the agenda (10 min.)

2. Introductory Activity (45 min.)

a. Everyone receives a piece of paper and is asked to fold it in four parts. In each square, they answer one of the following questions by writing something or drawing a picture about it:

Who were you in your country?
Who are you now?
Who would you like to be?
What would you like or expect from these trainings?

b. We play a tape of Haitian music; everyone moves around in two concentric circles to the music. When the music stops, people in the inside circle pair up with the facing person in the outside circle; they then share what they have drawn or written.[1]

c. The whole group reconvenes and each person introduces his/her partner to the others. The facilitator writes themes for each question.

3. Overview of the project: introduction of each site (15 min.)

a.The project coordinator summarizes the wealth of interns' backgrounds and strengths as presented in the previous activity and discusses the rationale for the project (to draw on their strengths in order to meet learners' needs). The notion of participatory training is introduced - that we don't want to just tell interns what to do, but want to learn from each other and share what is happening at the different sites.)

b. Master Teachers each present a brief introduction to the sites.

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[1]Thanks to Raul Añorve for inspiring this activity!

4. **Sharing experiences and concerns in small group** (1 hour with break)

a. Participants are divided into mixed site groups so they have a chance to talk to people from different sites. Each intern has been asked to come prepared to share something concrete from his/her site- an activity or lesson that went well, a lesson they especially liked, a concern or a piece of student writing (by the time of this workshop, they have all been working in a classroom for at least a month). Facilitators note issues, ideas, questions and concerns. This activity is designed to allow participants from different sites to get to know a little about each others' sites and concerns, to begin to elicit interns' concerns, and to establish an atmosphere of sharing.

b. Feedback to whole group: common concerns and issues are shared.

5. **Presentation on Freirean approach** (45 min.)

a. One of the Master Teachers presents background on the Freirean approach to situate our project in a broader context and show the relationship between literacy work in many third world countries (like those that interns come from) and literacy work in the U.S. The presentation touches on:

*what Freire did in Brazil and why, including overheads of the codifications he used
*the relationship between conscientization and the mechanical aspects of literacy
*the steps in Freire's process of literacy instruction

b. The Coordinator facilitates discussion about why we're talking about an approach first and will investigate methods/techniques later. The dialogue includes:

*What aspects of Freire's work do you think are relevant to work in the U.S. context? Which are not relevant? What specific principles can guide our work? (handouts)
*What themes for codification have you uncovered in your own work?
*Why did we organize the workshop the way we did - as a reflection of the approach (starting with participants' expriences, drawing issues from them, etc.)?
*How the next several workshops will be set up: sharing, presentation on a topic, hands-on practice.

7. **Evaluation** (15 min.)

Participants are invited to:

*give feedback (in any language) on any responses or reactions to the workshop
*share ideas that they got from the workshop for something they might like to try with students
*look for student issues that emerge in the classroom during the next month
*read Hong Ngo's story "Reflections of a New Teacher" (the story of a Vietnamese woman's experiences in becoming an ESL teacher) and respond to it in terms of their own feelings and experiences.

Handouts:

Comparison of Banking and Problem-Posing Approach (ACBE, Literacy for Empowerment, 1988:10)
Guidelines for Student-Centered Teaching (Auerbach 1991)
Ngo, Hong, "Reflections of a New Teacher," Voices (1990)

Sample Lesson

Guidelines for Student-Centered Teaching

•Start with students: find out what is happening in their lives, what is important to them. *Listen* to their concerns, problems and realites.

•Connect lesson *content* to students' lives: choose material that is related to their everyday reality and concerns; don't just focus on mechanical skills. What they say *(content)* is more important than how they say it *(form)*.

•Present the content to them in a *concrete* way: use a photo, drawing, proverb, story or dialogue that they can react to and discuss.

•Draw out their ideas in a *dialogue:* ask questions to bring out their ideas, experiences and opinions. Remember there are no right or wrong answers; your job as teacher is not to solve their problems, but to help them develop their own thinking and language.

•Connect the discussion to language and literacy work: Use their ideas and words to work on vocabulary, word formation, writing group stories, grammar exercises, reading so that students feel that the discussions count as lessons.

•Come back to the original topic or problem: Discuss alternatives: What ideas does the group have for addressing the problem or taking some action for change? Can students use the language or literacy work to DO something about the problem?

•Evaluate together: What did students feel they learned? What do they want to work on? Was their response to the problem effective? What should the group do next?

Auerbach, 1991

Reflections

The most important point about the first session was that it initiated the process of uncovering themes and issues for subsequent exploration. While some topics were identified when we asked interns directly what they would like to get from the trainings (eg., they said they wanted to learn about literacy campaigns in third world countries), the richest themes emerged from responses to structured activities and dialogue. Of course, this process of identifying issues mirrors what happens with adult learners: when asked directly what they want to do, they very often have a hard time identifying specific topics; however, when presented with catalyst or trigger activities, their concerns or needs emerge organically. The trick then is for the facilitator to listen for these themes and utilize them for further curriculum development.

During the first workshop, two kinds of issues emerged - substantive issues about literacy acquisition and issues about the content/processes of the training. The substantive issues clustered around the question of the relation of the social context to literacy acquisition. One of the interns said that he thought Hispanics don't feel they have to learn English because so many people in the U.S. speak Spanish. He felt that they are less motivated to learn English because they can get by without it. Implicit in his statement was the question: *What is the difference in the impact of the social context of literacy acquisition for Haitians and Hispanics?* However, when he used the term 'lazy' to describe his perception of the attitude of some Hispanics, he immediately generated heated reactions and a new issue was raised - the issue of *tensions between nationality groups*. While we didn't pursue the discussion in the heat of the moment, we came back to this theme at the following workshop, using it to illustrate how 'hot issues' can be identified. Once again, what happened in the workshop paralleled what happens in classes and we tried to utilize this shared experience to illustrate a subsequent point about curriculum development.

A related question about the social context was "Is it possible for people who have two or three low-paying jobs to learn English? In other words, *what is the effect of the conditions of people's lives on their ability to acquire English/literacy?* This was a question that recurred throughout the project, as we saw classes shrink and swell depending on what was happening in students' lives (see the section on implications). When we asked if people had uncovered any themes in their own work, one intern mentioned that he had used pictures of the war in the Gulf because it was a timely issue; another intern, however, said that you have to be careful with these pictures - students get upset because war pictures remind them of their own horrible situations. This raised the question about whether we should bring in loaded political themes and, if so, how. Finally, a question was raised about *how a Freirean approach could be implemented in North America,* where the political situation is so different from that in third world countries. Specifically, one of the interns questioned the possibility of including a conscientization component in our work. Each of these questions about how literacy work is shaped by contextual factors laid the groundwork for future discussions.

Several training issues emerged in the evaluation which were to be key throughout the project. First, interns said that they liked the chance to share ideas and exchange experiences with peers; they were especially interested to find that people from different backgrounds, working in different sites had ideas similar to their own. Although interns had been a little apprehensive, they felt that the atmosphere of the workshop was comfortable and they found that English was not a problem for them. Thus, *the value of providing time for sharing* was affirmed. Second, interns said that wanted more time on the Freire presentation so that they could ask questions, and find ways to apply his work to their own classrooms; someone mentioned not having enough time to understand Freire. Implicit in these comments was the point that *it is important not to try to do too much and to allot time for dialogue*. The amount of discussion that was generated had surprised us. This *tension between on the one hand being flexible so that unexpected issues can be explored and sticking to the topic so that we accomplish the objectives of the workshop* also mirrors a common classroom dilemma.

Finally, several interns expressed the desire for more concrete links to classroom practice; they wanted to talk about what to do in the classroom. This tension between some interns' desire for specific techniques and our resistance to prescriptions had to be negotiated throughout the the project; in the section on training issues, we come back to this and explore its implications. Thus, in addition to presenting a conceptual framework, this workshop began our own process of participatory curriculum development as we found themes and issues to pursue in later trainings.

Session 2: Finding Learners' Issues (March 1991)

Objectives

We had ended the last session by discussing the relevance of Freire's notion of centering the curriculum on issues of importance in students' lives. In the intervening month, we asked interns to look for issues in their work with students and bring them to share with the group. Our goal in this session was to address the questions, "What is an issue?" and "How do you find students' issues?' Objectives were:

*to link issues from the previous session to content of this session
*to explore the notion of student-generated themes - what are they?
*to present a range of tools for finding student themes
*to incorporate and discuss interns' observations/practice from the past month
*to practice finding themes by utilizing one tool
*to explore interns' own learning experiences

Overview of the session

I. What is an issue? (introduction linking this workshop to the last one -15 min.)

The facilitator reviews the discussion of the importance of basing the curriculum on issues that are important to learners. You know you've hit on a theme or issue when suddenly participants all start talking at once, can't stop talking about the topic and it relates to their social context. Three 'hot issues' from last month's workshop were:

*The question of whether Spanish-speaking people need or want to learn English
*The question of whether the Freirean approach is relevant for the U.S.
*The question of whether we should talk about war, violence and students' experiences in their home countries because these issues are too heavy.

II. How do you find issues?

a. Small group discussion (30 min.):Participants break into small groups (mixed sites) and share issues that they identified during the month. Two questions guide this discussion:

*What is an issue or theme that is important to your students?
*How did you identify this theme? How did the issue come up? What was your role in the process?

b. Whole group discussion (30 min.): The group reconvenes and two lists are made, one with learners' issues and the other with the ways participants found the issues; examples from our workshop were:

Student issues
finding an apartment or room
fishing
work experience
difficulties finding work
what students do at home
what life used to be in their own country
child care
use of the first language
skin color
not having a husband
wife not working
motivation versus attendance
gender roles, men v.women
lack of confidence

Ways of Finding Issues
small group discussions
observations
before/after class observations
games
dialogue journals
work on letters
drawings, cartoons
pictures and photographs
grammar exercises

c. Presentation on Ways of Finding Student Issues (30 min.): The Coordinator then summarizes what she sees on the two lists, noting that the main issues (in this case) seem revolve around:

*struggles of learning a new language/literacy
*classroom dynamics
*struggles of living in the U.S. - housing, work, etc.
*life in the home country
*gender roles

She points out that interns have identified two main ways of finding student issues:

-conscious listening: noting themes that arise spontaneously in heated or engaging discussions
-structured catalyst activities: activities that are designed to teach language/literacy while at the same time eliciting student experience and concerns

The coordinator then presents several other examples of catalyst activities using overheads and a handout. The group discusses examples from work at the sites.

III. Learning pictures activity: Using pictures to find issues (1 hour)

a. A set of photos which show various contexts for learning are spread out on a table. The photos are powerful images of people engaged in learning - a strict-looking teacher in front of rows of students, parents teaching kids to ride bikes, an old man carefully writing the alphabet, a circle of people studying, etc. Each participant is asked to choose a picture that evokes a strong reaction - that reminds them of something, that they like or dislike, that makes them think about an experience in their own life. After they choose a picture, they are asked to write about it for 15 minutes in any language they choose.

b. Participants share what they have written (although they can choose whether to actually read it aloud or not) in groups of three.

c. Facilitators note themes that arise as people share their pictures; issues that arose in our workshop were:

*childhood memories
*participation and cooperation by students
*losing your children because of new country and language
*the fear of traditional teachers
*language barriers
*good teachers
*ways of learning

d. The facilitator asks how participants might use these pictures in their own classrooms in order to link the activity to teaching. Interns in our workshop said:

*They liked the activity because pictures can be used with any level - for literacy or ESL. If the pictures are powerful and related to students' own experiences they will evoke strong reactions - either discussion or writing.
*They can be used with open-ended questions or accompanied by wh- questions.

Handouts: Handouts show examples of finding issues and using pictures to teach literacy.
Ways of learning about students (Auerbach)
Discovering generative themes (ACBE, Literacy for Empowerment)
Photo start (ACBE, Literacy for Empowerment)
Facilitator outline for learning pictures (Bronx Educational Services)
"Learning Pictures," (Nash et al, Talking Shop).

Reflections

This session was a prime example of the parallel between what we do in our workshop and what happens in the classroom. One of our main goals had been to link the workshops with interns' practice. We attempted to do this by incorporating examples from our shared context of work (the issues we chose to illustrate the concept of themes were drawn from our previous workshop), by demonstrating specific techniques, activities and exercises for use in the classroom and by modeling one activity to elicit issues by actually doing it together as a group.

Two seemingly conflicting responses to these attempts emerged in the evaluations. On the one hand, interns said they appreciated the chance to share more with others. As someone put it, "I liked the fact that interns had more to say this time." They appreciated the divergence of perspectives: "I learned how our opinions about pictuers are so different and so similar sometimes even though we are from different countries." And they understood how the workshops were *showing* them a way of teaching: "I am learning by experience." On the other hand, when they were back at their centers, some of the interns said that they were interested in talking more about the *mechanical problems in teaching literacy* and about specific teaching problems that come up in class. This surprised us for several reasons. First, we thought we had been specific in demonstrating concrete ideas for classroom use. Second, as we explained in the first session, we didn't want to start with mechanical questions, but rather with developing a way of thinking about teaching, listening and responding to students' substantive/experiential issues. Third, we didn't feel we could address the mechanical problems in our workshops because the three teaching contexts at the sites are so different - two are native language literacy (in different languages) and one is ESL.

Of course, the dilemmas we faced were similar to those that teachers face when students in a participatory classroom request traditional, skills-grammar-mechanical approaches to ESL and literacy instruction and when they are working in a multi-level class where learners have very different needs. We responded by trying to balance our own agenda with the request of participants by using the following strategies:

- set aside special workshop time for participants to talk about problems (mechanical or other)
- acknowledge that we can't meet everyone's needs in the monthly workshops
- model a process for addressing problems that can be used to deal both with teaching problems and with students' issues

In addition, we identified one "mechanical" problem which everyone encounters regardless of context, which we could address concretely, and which would open the door for deeper discussion of a meaning-centered view of literacy - the issue of *corrections*. This issue was timely because one of the Master Teachers had noted that an intern was correcting learners' errors for them - erasing incorrect writing and rewriting it. We discussed posing the issue of corrections as a universal teaching problem and drawing out a range of alternative strategies (including our own) for handling them. In this way we hoped again to model a process - the process of problem-posing.

Thus, this workshop was key in highlighting an issue which turned out to be central throughout the life of the project: the issue of negotiating our own agenda with interns' desire for classroom techniques and mechanical solutions. As will be seen, both our thinking and their thinking evolved over time; by the end of the project, we had new insights about how and when to incorporate techniques and they had significantly changed their conceptions about the role of mechanical aspects in literacy instruction.

Session 3: The Language Experience Approach (April 1991)

Objectives

This session proceeds with the next step of participatory curriculum development, moving on to the question, "What do you do with an issue after you've found it?" In this stage, issues are explored further through a variety of tools which extend literacy and language proficiency. This session focuses on one of these tools, the Language Experience Approach (LEA) as well as responding to the request t: address mechanical problems of literacy. The objectives were:

*to demonstrate one tool (LEA) for exploring a theme through literacy work
*to address one mechanical teaching problem (handling corrections) in a problem-posing format
*to provide space to address other problems of practice

Overview of the session

1. **Introduction** linking this workshop to the last one(15 min.)

The facilitator reviews what happened at the last workshop, summarizing the main themes from students' lives and the tools for finding issues. She introduces the next stage of the curriculum development process which addresses the question, "What do you do with students' issues once you find them?" and explains that we will be exploring this question in the next several sessions.

2. **What do you do with issues in class?** (Small group activity -30 min.)

Participants break into mixed site groups to share issues that they have uncovered, how they found them and what they did with them. They choose one student story which they will report back to the whole group.

3. **The Language Experience Approach (LEA)** (1 hour and 15 min.)

a. Group feedback: The groups reconvene and each one reports back. The facilitator writes one of the stories using the LEA approach as it is being told. (This section of the workshop did not proceed according to plan for us; what actually happened is described in the reflections.)

b. Presentation on LEA: The facilitator presents LEA as one way of dealing with an issue. She starts by explaining/defining the term and presenting real examples from classes at the sites. The participating teachers who generated the stories describe the process (where the story came from, how it was written, what the class did with it afterwards). Responses to the following questions are elicited from the group.

**Why do LEA?*

It's a way to make a discussion legitimate by extending it to language/literacy work.
It links oral language with the written symbol.
It's easier for students to read since it's their own words.
It's a way to reverse roles in the classroom.
It starts with meaning and connects mechanical work to it.
It stimulates participation.
It ensures that content is relevant.
It helps in finding what students need to work on.
It allows the teacher to stall for time if he/she doesn't know how to address a 'hot' issue.

How do we do LEA?

The emphasis is on being a good listener, writing what students say and going through various stages of reading the story. Again, examples are presented in typed format.

What do we do with LEA stories once they have been generated?

The facilitator asks the group how they would follow up on one of the sample stories, eliciting a range of responses and emphasizing that in a participatory approach, the group should be sure to come back to the issue that prompted the story, rather than using the exercises as a pretext for grammar/skills work.

What are some questions or debates about LEA?

The facilitator asks the group if they would write the LEA story in the students' exact words (even with errors) or correct them. The group discusses various strategies. The facilitator summarizes the debate about this issue in the ESL field. The various factors influencing the choice of strategies are discussed.

4. Handling corrections (30 min.)

The facilitator presents a real piece of student writing with many errors of spelling and grammar. He asks participants how they might respond to this piece of writing: their strategies are listed on newsprint. In our session, responses included:

*teacher corrects for student
*it depends on level, student, context, purpose and the audience
*whole class correction
*make students comfortable with making mistakes
*don't focus on making corrections; focus on meaning and respond to meaning
*through response in which teacher models correct forms
*find problem areas and teach those later

5. Problems or questions about practice (15 min.)

The facilitator asks if anyone has a pressing teaching problem that he/she would like to address to the group. In our session, a spelling problem in Spanish and a related problem in Creole (regarding confusion between j and g) were discussed.

Reflections

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this session was that it did not go as planned. The first deviation from our expectations occurred in the small group discussions. Instead of talking about what to do with students' issues, many of the participants discussed the content of the issues themselves - the students' problems finding jobs, their socio-economic difficulties, etc. Many of the participants expressed that they are struggling with these issues and sometimes feel powerless to do anything because the problems seem overwhelming.

When it came time to report back a story from each group and demonstrate the language experience approach, the accounts of the small group discussions were so powerful that it seemed inappropriate to write the stories: trying to write the participants' exact words was blocking the discussion. The LEA exercise felt like a mechanical response to a substantive issue. Thus, again, we deviated from the plan in that the facilitator decided to write the main points of the discussion on newsprint (rather than writing the stories). She then asked participants to talk about how they respond to the enormous issues that students are facing. The group came up with the following strategies:

- trying to help students directly (eg., refer them to agencies, help them fill out forms, etc.)
- discussing the reasons for the problems; seeing how deeply learners can think about the issues: using *why* questions to get at the social roots of the problem
- posing problem back to students so they can discuss possible strategies and learners can come up with their own solutions; letting students help each other
- work with the problem by building vocabulary, doing exercises about applying for jobs
- connect issue with reading and writing
- invite in outside resources

Of course, the interesting thing about how this workshop developed is that, again, it mirrors what happens in class: if you try to respond to a loaded issue with a mechanical exercise, it may feel inappropriate. Having to abandon the plan and let the lesson go in its own direction is probably more the norm than the exception. Thus, in the workshop itself, we stopped to reflect on what was happening: the facilitator explained what we had planned to do, why we changed the plan, and how this is like what happens in teaching.

A second point about this workshop is that it modeled problem-posing in dealing with interns' issues. At three points during the session, the facilitator posed a teaching issue back to the group for dialogue (in discussing how to respond to loaded issues, how to write students' language, and how to respond to errors). In each case, the facilitator elicited strategies and wrote down the range of options that were mentioned. Project staff participated in this process, contributing their ideas alongside those of interns. Thus, rather than telling participants what to do, a tone of jointly constructing alternatives was set. This process sent the message that there's no single way that will fit all circumstances; each teacher has to assess the situation, examine the context and purposes and base decisions on a range of factors.

Finally, because the session explicitly included sections on mechanical problems, it represented an attempt to model a negotiated curriculum that addressed participants' concerns. However, in a site-based evaluation session, one of the interns said she still felt that the workshops were divorced from what happens in class and that there should be more of a focus on methods and techniques. She said that the process of the workshops and the approach to education is too informal. She also said, *"I don't think we can solve the problems of the world. Why do we talk so much about unemployment - this is not a jobs agency."* Her comments caused a strong reaction from other interns, one of whom said, "So what happens to thinking if you present worksheets and follow formal methods?" Another intern said that some of the students had come to the program because the teaching was too formal at other sites. At a different site, a similar discussion took place, in which one intern said she had expected more formal presentation of methods. Another intern responded that the purpose of the workshops was not just to present one way to do things (in this case, deal with corrections), but to provide a place to share ideas and debate.

In retrospect, what these discussions represent is the interns taking on the debate about formal vs. informal education themselves. They had identified a key pedagogical issue and, in some cases, interns had internalized the approach to the extent that they were able to defend it and argue for it.

Session 4: Problem-Posing (May 1991)

Objectives

Continuing with the question of what to you do with an issue once you find it, this session focuses on developing problem-posing codes. While the previous workshop had implemented a problem-posing process in addressing interns' teaching issues, this session makes that process explicit and extends its application to learners' issues. It models the process of problem-posing by applying it to a recurring intern issue - the advantages/disadvantages of non-formal teaching approaches, thus continuing to explore participants' concerns while providing a tool for classroom use. The objectives were:

*to model the process of using codes to explore an intern issue
*to further explore the issue of formal vs. non-formal approaches to education
*to demonstrate and practice developing codes and dialogue questions around student issues

Overview of the session

I. Problem-posing skit

a. Presentation of skit (5 min): Two Master Teachers act out the following conversation. One teacher voices many of the concerns that interns had expressed (about focusing on skills, grammar, etc.) rather than social problems; the other teacher utilizes student issues to develop literacy work.

Ana: How was your week? What did you do?

Byron: Oh, the ususal thing, we did the next chapter in the book.

Ana: How did it go? What did you do with it?

B: They read the story and did the exercises.

A: Did they like it?

B: Oh, I don't know. Some of them were lost and some liked it, but they still don't remember the past tense. What about you?

A: I started by asking about their weekends. I was trying to review the past tense and to see what they were thinking about.

B: Did they use the past tense?

A: Some of them did but what we ended up talking about was their worries about their kids playing outside.

B: But what was the lesson?

A: That was the lesson! They talked about it for the whole class.

B: The whole class? My students would never do that. They want the teacher to come with a work sheet or book. You can't solve all their problems. This is supposed to be a language class, not a welfare office.

A: Well, they came up with a lot of ideas and we wrote them up for next time. They always seem more interested when we talk about their lives.

B: How are they going to learn to read and write that way?

b. Whole group dialogue (30 minutes): The facilitator guides dialogue through the five-step questioning process outlined by Wallerstein (1983) to explore the issues represented by the code. The dialogue moves through the following general types of question:

*What happened in this skit? What did you see?
*What was the problem here?
*Does this seem familiar? Have you experienced anything similar?
*Where do these perspectives come from? Why do some people prefer one/the other?
*What can be done about this conflict in perspectives?

III. Presentation about developing codes and dialogue questions (30 min.)

a. Introduction to problem-posing codes: The presenter reflects on what had just happened, noting that the code was developed in response to concerns we had heard: the issue of traditional vs. participatory approaches applies as much to our own workshops as to work with students. She makes the five steps to the questioning process explicit as well. Problem-posing codes are defined as a tool for exploring learners' issues while developing language/literacy.

b. Examples of codes: The presenter presents several additional examples of codes that have either been developed in this project or for students similar to those in our classes. Some of the examples evoke heated discussion of the issue presented in the code, while others fall flat.

c. Guidelines for developing codes and dialogue questions: Based on the reactions to the previous examples, the group then discusses what makes a code work (i.e., it evokes heated response, dialogue and social analysis). The presenter then generalizes about the characteristics of a "good" code and explains the rationale for the five steps of the dialogue process.

d. Language/literacy focus: The presenter asks if participants think this kind of activity 'counts' as language/literacy work and, if so, how. She asks participants to discuss how they might incorporate a specific focus on 'skills.'

III. Developing codes and dialogue questions activity

a. Making codes and questions (45 minutes): Participants break into small groups with others from the same site. They are given handouts with guidelines for developing codes and dialogue questions, newsprint and markers. Each group identifies an issue that has come up with students at their site and develops a code and dialogue questions based on this issue. They write the code and questions on the newsprint.

b. Presentation of codes (45 mins.): Each group acts out its code, and someone in it guides discussion using the dialogue questions; the newsprint is put up; the group provides feedback and reflects on the process.

Reflections

The starting code about traditional vs. non-formal teaching immediately triggered an animated response among participants. While we had (perhaps simplistically) anticipated that the discussion would focus on which approach is more effective, they talked about students' expectations: they said that students often expect a traditional teacher who determines what needs to be taught; thus, it is important to combine aspects of both approaches, drawing on students' issues but at the same time including traditional methods to make them feel that it is 'real' teaching. In addition, participants again raised the issue of context, arguing that the extent to which one's approach is traditional vs. participatory depends on factors like the content of the class, the atmosphere and the level. In this discussion, some interns felt that the kind of conversation elicited in a participatory approach is appropriate for ESL class (because students need to develop speaking skills), but less important in first language literacy class. They also felt that the higher the level, the more traditional teaching students expect. Finally, they felt that the approach may vary depending on the mood of the class on a given day.

This led to a disucssion of the function of a pre-determined curriculum. One of the interns said that it is difficult to implement a participatory approach as a new teacher because it requires so much thinking on your feet: she felt that new teachers need a minimum curriculum at the beginning which they can refer to. On the other hand, as one of the Master Teachers pointed out, even the best planned lesson can fall flat unexpectedly: sometimes you have to change what you are doing mid-stream because something comes up or because students don't understand it. The coordinator then introduced the concept of the emergent curriculum, framing its goals in terms of trying to *uncover student needs* rather than only trying to *cover the curriculum.*

Finally, we ended this section by discussing why we had introduced this code: in addition to being an issue for teachers in the classroom, it is an issue in our own training. We talked about our own sense in the core group that interns were expecting a more traditional approach to teacher training in which they would be told what to do and given prescriptions for techniques. We made explicit our own philosophy of training - that we hoped to model a participatory approach by what we do in the workshops.

In the next part of the workshop,when characteristics and examples of codes were presented, the first example of a code immediately evoked heated discussion. It was a code about the dynamics of language use and prompted people to talk about how intimidated they feel when someone speaks better English than they do. Another code about whether to learn Creole triggered responses primarily from the Haitian participants. We discussed why the codes elicited differential reponses, noting that codes need to reflect familiar problems of the particular group of learners.

The final segment of the workshop focused on site-based groups developing their own codes. The Jackson-Mann (mixed ESL) group developed a code about using the first language in the ESL classroom. The Haitian Multi-Service Center group developed a code about students being too distracted by their worries about employment (no job, no money) to pay attention in class. The East Boston group developed a code about whether students feel ready to begin learning English, with some students wanting to get on with it while others want to continue with Spanish literacy. There were two notable points about the development of these codes: first, everyone felt that it was easy to agree on a problem or theme for the codes - each of the codes summarized the state of the classes at that site; second, each of the codes themselves triggered an outpouring of suggestions for 'solutions' to the problem from participants from other sites, as well as a sharing of related experiences. While the interns' initial response was to try to find the 'correct' way of handling each issue, the faciliator proposed doing the code in class to work out alternatives or strategies with students.

In summary, the workshop affirmed the power of codes as a process to generate dialgoue and creative thinking. In each of the situations where a code was presented, the interns responded as though the issue were their own and jumped into the discussion. The challenge in this workshop was to get interns to step back and think of the codes as a teaching tool - and consider how they might be used with students in the classroom. In looking back on the minutes from this workshop, there are two further points which interns made which we, as trainers, may not have heard clearly enough: the first is that we need to combine traditional and participatory approaches (rather than trying to focus exclusively on learner-driven curriculum) in order to meet learners' expectations in certain contexts; the second is that a certain degree of predetermined structure is necessary, not just for learners, but for the interns, particularly as they begin their teaching, in order to give them a sense of security and direction.

Session 5: Socio-drama (June 1991)

Objectives

This session presents an additional tool for developing language and literacy while exploring student issues. It builds on the codes presented at the previous workshop and extends them to a range of theater applications in literacy education. In addition, because an outside presenter from another participatory literacy education program facilitated the workshop, interns were able to see our own project as part of a larger participatory literacy education iniative. Objectives were:

*to reflect on interns' practice using codes with their students
*to extend the applications of the code development process of the previous workshop
*to explore the rationale and processes of using theater techniques in literacy education
*to practice theater exercises which can be used with learners
*to hear about a related participatory literacy education project in New York

Overview of the session

1. **Codes developed at sites** (30 min.)

After a brief introduction of new participants and the presenter, sites present codes that they have developed since the previous workshop, explain why they developed them and how they followed up on it in class. In this case, two codes were presented, one about the use of the first language in ESL class and one about a woman who goes to the doctor with a back problem, is given Tylenol and a bill for $80.

2. **Uses of theater in literacy education** (1 hr.)

Klaudia Rivera from El Barrio Popular Education Program in NYC presented this segment of the workshop. Her views of theater education are based on the work of Agosto Boal, a Brazilian contemporary of Freire, who thinks theater should be taken back to its origins as a vehicle for popularizing culture, rather than entertaining the elite.

a. Rationale for using theater in literacy education: Klaudia said that there are many reasons for using theater in literacy education. It opens many possibilities and allows you to:

*create a special space in the classroom
*become somebody else
*convey a message quickly
*experiment with reality, to show reality in a different way and to imagine new possibilities

b. The process of using theater: Klaudia said that the process of using theater to address student issues is even more important than the product - the actual performance (unlike in traditional theater where the ultimate goal is a polished performance). The process, like a lesson, is not static. It includes:

*finding an issue ((from the community, school, etc.)
*making a code or skit with students: this is different from what was presented at the last workshop because *students are involved in making the code*
*using literacy: other students take notes as the skit is developing; at first they may write words, then sentences, and finally a script. They can take notes about what is good, what relates to their experience, etc.
* doing social analysis: there is a constant process of revision and construction with acting and analysis woven together. As students are acting, if someone else says they had a similar experience, Klaudia says, "Show it to me." Students all participate in showing their experiences related to a theme until the group finds what is

common, the aspects that make it a general experience. This becomes a form of analysis: you try to discover through the process what is systematic in people's experiences. The teacher asks questions like, "Is the doctor personally like this or are doctors in general like this?" As participants review the skit, the teacher asks students to find places where the actors are acting in ways that impose systematic constraints on them. As people recognize the tools or strategies that limit them, they can begin to challenge them.

*developing strategies: Klaudia said that recognizing how the system imposes its strategies on you isn't enough; you have to have your own strategies. Usually, when you get home from the doctor, you think, "I should have done this.. or said that..". Situations often repeat themselves. Theater allows you the space to rehearse strategies for doing things differently. Here it is important to remember that there are no right endings. Students should be invited to act out alternative strategies. As people make suggestions for how to respond to the doctor, the teacher says, "Show me." After students act out their strategies, she asks, "Would this really happen?" As students share stories and strategies, they see that problems they have internalized as their personal problems are general.

3. Demonstration of theater exercises for classroom use (1 hr.)

a. Concentration exercise: Everyone stands in a circle and the leader starts a clapping pattern, asking everyone to pass it around (each one does the same exercise with the next person; the purpose is to relax people and get them to concentrate).

b. Body images: Klaudia said that there are ways to form images other than pictures. She divided the group in two and asked each group to think of two words that had social meaning for them. One group then acted out the word in a static image or pose. The other group then moved the people around to create a group image. By coincidence both groups chose the word homelessness. Klaudia asked each group to find a pose for this word. Then the subgroups looked around to see how others had made this image. We talked about this as a way to explore stereotypes. Another word was discrimination. After one group had made the images, Klaudia sked the others to choose one image that reminded them of something in their own experience. This could become the catalyst for individual writing or for developing a group play.

c. Classroom uses: Klaudia elicited ways the exercises could be used in class. Ideas were:

*Divide the class in half; one half acts out a socially important word and the others guess what their image represents. They write about what they see and how the image relates to their own lives.

*Use these exercises when students are tired.

*Use these exercises when students are having a hard time concentrating because they're worried (as in code from last workshop); ask students to choose a word that represents something they're worried about and act it out. They can go on to write key words, a short play, etc., depending on their level.

5. El Barrio Popular Education Program (25 min.)

Several points in Klaudia's description of the El Barrio Program were particularly relevant for us:

*The classes are based on students' experiences; student writings are published in a yearly magazine which becomes a kind of evaluation tool.

*The curriculum is connected to the community. Students do research and writing about issues in their community.

*The eventual goal of the program is complete community control. Students participate in the board and get leadership training.

Reflections

This workshop was characterized by an increasingly active and critical role on the part of the interns. The first indication of this growing participation by interns was the fact that they began the session by presenting skits that they had developed as a result of the previous training workshop. Two of the sites had identified themes from within their own learner groups, written codes according to the guidelines we had presented, tried them with their students and come to our session prepared to share them with the group. By beginning with their skits and incorporating something they had developed into the training, we were able to create an explicit link between the interns' practice and the Saturday sessions.

The second indication of the growing critical awareness on the part of interns was reflected in the questions that they asked to the outside presenter. Rather than accepting Klaudia's presentation unquestioningly, they engaged in a lively and active discussion, bringing up their hesitations and concerns about the approach she was presenting. For example, when Klaudia suggested involving students in making a code about their own problem (rather than just making a code for them based on what the teacher has observed), one of the interns aksed, "What if the students don't want to show or talk about an issue because it may hurt someone?" Klaudia responded by explaining how to decide which issues may be suitable for theater work: in some cases, you know an issue is probably safe if it comes up in the context of a group discussion; in other cases, an issue may arise in a personal, one-to-one conversation and you know it is actually a group issue, but rather than presenting it directly, you may deal with it from an outside position, brining in a stimulus from outside the class. Another example of a critical question occurred when Klaudia suggested that some learners should record the language and the action while others are acting; someone asked how this can be done quickly if the participants either don't speak the same language or are limited in their wiritng ability. Klaudia responded that for the purposes of this exercise, people can document what is happening in their own language, writing it any way they hear it or can represent it.

Another important aspect of this session was the fact that it situated our project in a larger context and showed participants that other programs are approaching their work in a similar manner. Since the El Barrio project has a much longer history, and is more established in pursing a participatory approach, it gave participants a sense of the potential of the work we are doing. In addition, Klaudia invited interns to participate in a meeting of community-based educators in NYC later in the summer, thus creating a concrete link between our project and others. This connection to something beyond our particular programs and city added a certain legitimacy to the approach, showing that although the participatory and native language literacy orientation is not 'mainstream', it is gaining increasing acceptance.

Participants' active engagement with the workshop continued after the session was over, as evidenced by what they did in their classrooms and what they said in their evaluations. One intern asked to have a copy of the Boal book to read; several others followed up with theater exercises in their classes. One of the new interns at the Haitian Center, for example, used the exercises in class when she noticed that students were particularly down - worried about finding work, etc. She started with the warm-up exercises as a way to loosen people up, get them motivated and less distracted by their worries. Then she had the class divide into two groups and explained that the exercise was a way to help them get started with a dialogue/story (they were having trouble deciding on what they wanted to write about). Each group chose a word that had social meaning for them; the words they chose were *pov* (poor) and *maladi* (illness). One group acted while the other reacted. Then she wrote sentences on the board based on what they had seen and described. Many of the interns commented on how much they liked the workshop because it was active; this comment seemed to implicitly challenge the view that training is 'good' when it involves transmission of information.

JULY session: Our group meeting in July was a party at the coordinator's house; we felt that the party would provide an opportunity for the whole group to get to know each other outside the context of the university and help to consolidate the group. People brought food and music from their respective countries. Many commented how much they appreciated the fact that the project gave them a chance to get to know people from other countries in a society where we are so often separated by nationality.

Session 6: The Photo-story (Sept. 1991)

Objectives

In this session, we invited a literacy educator from the Boston area, Cathy Walsh, to explore how popular education techniques which had been developed in Latin American could be applied in a North American context. The specific focus of this workshop was a model of learner-generated literacy materials (the photo-story) that addresses issues of the social context. The objectives of this session were:

- to demonstrate processes for connecting social analysis to literacy development
- to show how one learner-generated materials project developed from beginning to end
- to model additional tools for participatory curriculum development (problem-posing trees, photo-stories and mapping)
- to continue to connect the work of the project to a broader context

Overview of the session

1. Introduction of the context and rationale for the workshop (20 minutes)

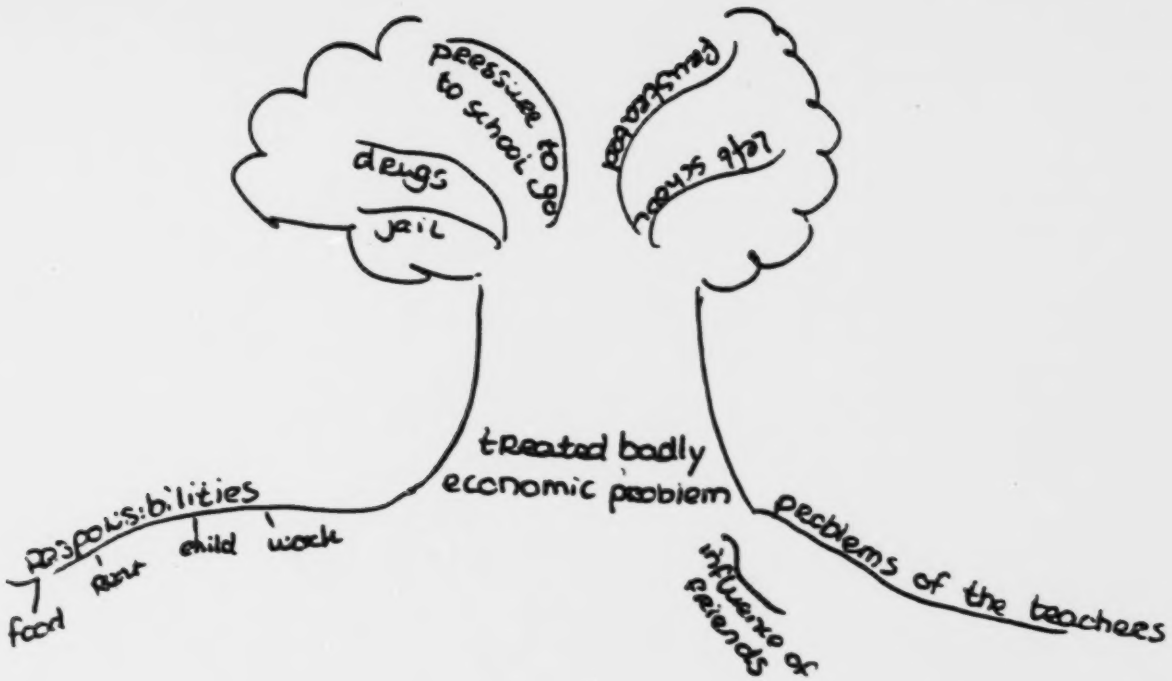
The focus of the workshop is a project in an urban high school involving students from Puerto Rico, Haiti and Central America with limited first language literacy and schooling. Cathy began by arguing that popular education techniques developed in Latin America are particularly suitable for this group of students because the traditional approach only makes them feel that they don't know anything themselves, while a particpatory approach:

- uses learners' knowledge
- builds upon their collective concerns
- actively engages learners in the processes of developing their own knowledge and skill
- situates learners in what they are learning and in their own reality so that they have a reason to develop their own literacy
- promotes dialogue as students learn from each other by listening
- leads to action and an opportunity to change the situation in their community.

2. Generating photo-stories (1 hour 30 min.): a step-by-step description of the process used in Cathy's project

a. Photographs as codes: One technique for starting group photo-stories is to show a photograph on an overhead projecter. This process helps everyone to focus on one thing. Cathy demonstrated with a photo of a person in a doorway. This photo, when shown to the high school students, was accompanied by dialogue about what they saw, why the person was there, how he felt, whether there was a problem and whether they had ever felt the way they thought he felt. The students then brainstorm what the picture makes them think about and the teacher writes down key words while students are talking. These become initial words for literacy work.

b. Problem-posing trees: Because students may have trouble with an abstract discussion of the issues that they identify during the brainstorming session, Cathy draws a picture of a tree to symbolize the problem under consideration. This symbol takes the focus off the purely linguistic level and shifts the focus to social analysis. In the tree image, the trunk of the tree represents the problem, the roots represent the causes of the problem, the branches and leaves represent the results or effects of the problem and a watering can represents possible solutions or strategies for addressing the problem. Participants can then put symbols to represent their view of each aspect of the problem (if they are not yet able to write words). The following diagram represents the way workshop participants analyzed the problem which emerged from the photo code:



Cathy pointed out that if you focus only on the cause of problems, students may feel fatalistic while if you focus on things to change, they might feel more positive. She says that for a tree to grow and bear fruit, it needs nourishment and she uses the watering can to frame questions like, "What will we put in the soil to change the roots: What can we do to confront discrimination?" Cathy suggests starting with a problem-posing tree each time you start a new theme, as a way to frame analysis and elicit participants' perspectives.

c. Generating a story: Once an issue has been identified and analyzed, the group works to generate a story using the original picture as a catalyst. The advantage of using a photo is students don't have to talk about themselves but can project their issues and concerns onto the person in the picture. The students give the person in the picture a name (in this case Julian) and talk about him without having to expose themselves. They discuss the treatment he receives in school, and his economic problems, the roots of the problem (in this case, responsibilities for his work, child, rent and food, the influence of his friends, problems with teachers, suspensions, lack of respect, tardiness). They identify effects such as drugs, jail, a court which obliged him to go back to school, and leaving home. The students in Cathy's group wanted Julian to go back to school and went on to generate reasons for him to come back.

d. Drawing your way into literacy: When Cathy suggested writing Julian's story, they initially said, "We don't know how to read and write - we can't do this." To get students into the process of writing a story, Cathy told them to think of three ideas related to the story and draw pictures representing those ideas. She then told them to write about the drawings, helping each other in small groups. The students put their writings on the wall and discussed them in a large group. They expanded on ideas of each small group and continued the dialogue, bringing in their own stories. It took Cathy's group eight one hour sessions to develop a story in this way.

e. Putting the photo-story together: As the students develop the story, they take on different roles and responsibilities. Someone acts as director, recording which are the strongest pictures. Someone takes notes about the pictures, and some take photos based on the notes. After the pictures are taken, the story goes through another revision process. New issues may emerge during the process. In Julian's case, once the story had him deciding to go back to school, the question of what would happen when he went back arose. This led students to focus on their lives in schools, and on the rules that seemed to push them out. They discussed where school rules come from, who wrote them, and decided to rewrite three of the rules.

f. Producing the photo-story: If students decide they want to publish their story (make it public), they face issues of editing, typing, lay-out, etc. The decision-making process in Cathy's group was in the students' hands: they formed an editorial board, learned how to do word processing, made decisions about editing, etc. The responsibility for production was theirs.

g. Action: Ideally, the function of the process goes beyond literacy work to address the issue which gave rise to the story. In the case of Cathy's project, students organized a book party to which they invited family, friends, and school administration, resulting in some changes in the rules and a new respect for the learners.

3. Mapping (30 mins.)

a. Rationale: To extend our discussion of linking literacy work to social analysis, Cathy introduced the technique of mapping which is used in Latin America. Mapping is:

*a strategy for identifying and documenting issues
*a way to record and facilitate discussion and dialogue
*a way to think in visual rather than verbal form
*a way to situate and analyze aspects of participants' lives in a broader context
*a way to connect individual or group issues to social institutions
*a way to facilitate critical thinking

b. Process: The mapping process involves a three-step process:1)drawing important issues in participants' lives, asking them what life is like for them (usually relating to chuch, community, employment); 2) connecting the issue to institutions (drawing surrounding institutions that affect the problem area, and asking questions like "why is the factory closed?"); and 3) looking at broader social factors (what are the power structures that shape the experiences of their lives?).

c. Practice: Participants look at sample mapping exercises and then break into groups to do their own mapping exercises related to three issues that they face (in this case as literacy workers). In our session, the issues were: learners' attitudes toward teachers/interns based on their status, language background, race/ethnicity; learners' preoccupations with social problems that impede learning; barriers to implementing a participatory approach, such as students' attitudes toward assessment.

Reflections

As in the previous session, participants immediately jumped into the exercises, bringing their own experiences and analyses to the theme that Cathy's students had identified. The duality of their roles as both immigrants and teachers enabled them to relate to the substance of the issue (in this case, discrimination that language minority students often face in schooling) and to the teaching dynamics of utilizing this approach. Thus, for example, the tree exercise prompted one of the interns to talk about how she had experienced the high school students' issue herself in her first class at community college (when a teacher told her she would not pass the class just because English wasn't her first language). Interns also became very involved in discussion of the analysis of root causes of the students' dropping out of school; one of them posed the question, "Who is responsible for making people not get an education?" and "Why doesn't the government want some people to get ahead?" This brought up a discussion of discrimination and its functions.

In terms of teaching issues, interns also responded with their own understandings of the realities of classroom life, sometimes challenging the presenter with very specific questions about implementation. For example, one intern asked whether Cathy introduces the letters of the alphabet before beginning the problem-posing trees with initial literacy students. Another intern asked, " How you do these trees in an ESL class where some students expect a traditional grammar-based approach?" Another asked, "What if students are bored with social analysis and want mechanical exercises? How do you change their attitudes?" And one intern told the story of his own ESL teacher meeting with great resistance when she asked students to bring pictures to class. Just the fact that the interns felt confident enough to ask these questions of an 'outside expert' revealed a change in their view of themselves and their knowledge. Cathy responded with specific examples from her own practice (eg., "I tell them that this helps me create what we will do in class. I need to know what you think. I need to learn. We will do grammar, reading and writing in order to make this relevant to you. This is my form of taking notes. This is what I need."). With this kind of sharing, the tone of the workshop was one of dialogue between knowlegeable peers rather than one of an expert telling novices what to do.

In the final segment of the workshop, when Cathy asked participants to map specific issues from their own practice at the sites, they were immediately able to pinpoint issues; for example, interns from one site drew a picture of registration day at the site, with most of the students signing up for the North American teacher's class and few signing up for the classes of the Hispanic teachers. Another site drew a student who was lost in thought about money, Haiti and the White House. Although we didn't have time to fully explore this tool, the fact that it was relatively easy to pinpoint these issues revealed how reflective the interns had become about their practice. In addition, it helped us to identify some training issues and laid the groundwork for the following session in which we applied the problem-posing process to teaching issues in a more systematic way.

The evaluation of the workshop at the sites revealed several points about the interns' development as well as revealing a training issue. First of all, the interns' growing sense of confidence was confirmed by the the fact that they openly acknowledged that they really didn't understand the mapping exercise (because of time constraints). Secondly, the interns exhibited a new level of comfort with evaluating in a critical and two-sided way (rather than feeling they had to give only positive feedback): on the one hand, some questioned the feasibility of doing the tree exercise with beginning literacy students (saying that students might not have the skills to do it or be too "lazy" to think critically); on the other, there was a very positive reaction to the photo-story idea. The training issue that was raised for us concerned the relationship between the workshops and implementation of the ideas in the classrooms: the heated discussion about the purposes and value of doing problem-posing trees in the on-site evaluations indicated to us that *on-site follow-up is key in making the transition from the training to implementation.* It allowed interns to ask questions, express doubts, and through the process of explaining their understandings to each other, take ownership of the ideas. They were able to internalize what they had learned and think about ways of applying it in their own work as they explained it to each other. In terms of actual implementation, the process was uneven: all of the sites decided to use photos and to buy overhead projectors so that they could use transparencies as a tool for catalyzing discussion. The workshop inspired one intern to embark on a photostory project with her students.

Session 7: From Theory to Practice (Oct. 1991)

Objectives

This session came at a point when one group of interns was just beginning the training and another group was working independently for the first time. For this reason, the session focuses both on introducing basic principles of a participatory approach and on putting theory into practice. It explores issues of implementing the approach in the reality of classrom life, first by examining the relationship between lesson-planning and lesson implementation and second, by utilizing problem-trees as a tool to address problems of practice (thus linking this workshop to the previous one). Objectives were:

*to introduce new interns to the group and the approach
*to synthesize and review the principles and process of participatory curriculum development
*to relate our own training workshops to the participatory curriculum development process
*to identify interns' issues in making the transition from theory to practice
*to apply the problem-posing tree as a tool to explore problems of practice
*to provide one concrete tool for making the transition from theory to practice (lesson planning)
*to reinforce the notion of interns learning from each other

Overview of the session

1. **Introductory Activity** (15 min.) -Icebreaker to introduce new and old interns

Each participant receives a card with part of a word written on it. He/she must then find someone with a card that completes the word. Partners then spend five minutes talking about something new which has happened in their lives recently. Each partner then briefly introduces his/her partner to the whole group.

2. **Review of Participatory Approach** (30 min.)

a. Brainstorming/elicitation of prior knowledge: The facilitator asks the group to brainstorm responses to the following questions:

*What are the main ideas of a participatory approach? What were Paulo Freire's key points?
*And how do we do it (implement this approach?)
*What methods or tools are used in this approach?

b. Synthesis of principles: The facilitator then goes over basic principles of a particpatory approach, linking the points elicited in the brainstorming to a hand-out from a South African literacy program which talks about the relationship between teachers and learners, the learning content, the teaching process, and the results from this kind of learning (See attached handout)

c. Overview of participatory curriculum development and how our workshops fit into this process: Two transparencies are projected, one which outlines a participatory curriculum development process and the other which shows how the previous workshops have mirrored that process.

3. **Moving from theory to practice** - lesson planning and implementation (40 min.)

Mixed site small groups with both old and new interns discuss what actually happens when you try to use this approach in the classroom. The basic question in the groups is "What's the reality of trying to do this?" Facilitators used questions on the attached handout to guide discussion.

4. Problem-posing trees (one hour)

a. Making problem-posing trees: Participants in the small groups identify one common teaching concern or problem that arose in the previous discussion and follow the problem-posing tree model from the previous workshop to analyze that concern. Highlights of our trees included:

Problem: NOT ENOUGH TIME FOR PLANNING

root causes: planning once a week; busy at school; full time job plus teaching; not paid for planning; other commitments and responsibilities

results: use of materials that sometimes don't work, not enough appropriate materials for different levels; students complaining

solutions: distribute planning time (2x a week); more support from experienced teachers. more materials; only one level in the class

Problem: NOT ENOUGH APPROPRIATE MATERIALS FOR L1 LITERACY

root causes: content of existing materials irrelevant; teachers don't have skills to draw own materials; need of different books; no time to draw pictures or create materials

results: more difficult to prepare; students are bored; teachers have to work harder and adapt materials all the time; gives teachers a feeling of failure, of not being capable of answering to students' needs; students are distracted; teachers have to work harder

solutions: look for pictures; go out and take photographs in many places where immigrants go; sharing of materials and different groups; more pay for time to develop materials

*MIXED LEVELS IN ONE CLASS

root causes: time schedules; not enough teachers; students don't want to leave; poor placement; different skills

results: not enough progress; some students are bored or confused; students feel bad about themselves; harder to teach

solutions: find topic that everybody is interested in; let students use their first language to help each other; review the same materials with different methods; divide the class; present the problem to the students and elicit their strategies (design a code about this problem); better placement; help each other; find a tutor; different activities for different groups

b. Feedback from small groups: Each small group presents its tree and then everyone is asked to share something useful that he/she learned from someone else that might benefit others.

5. Lesson planning (30 min.)

Rather than presenting a formula or ideal model of what a lesson plan 'should' look like, real lesson plans that participants have actually used are presented in order to show their variability. The curriculum specialist, one of the Master Teachers and one intern each share examples of lesson plans they have developed with a brief explanation. Each presenter shows more than one plan to demonstrate that there are various approaches which depend on time constraints, topic, and purpose of the plan. Samples of these plans are attached.

from UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN - SOUTH AFRICA
GROUP LEADER'S NOTES: A GUIDE
FOR LITERACY TEACHERS (vii)

(Sample handouts)

HOW ADULTS LEARN

1. **The relationship between learners and teacher**
   - Teacher and learners should relate as equals.
   - The teacher should show learners that s/he trusts them and believes in them.
   - The teacher must respect learners, their language and culture.
   - Learners should have an active say in deciding what and how to learn.
   - Teacher and learners can both learn from each other.

2. **The learning content:**
   - What people learn should have meaning, make sense to them.
   - It should be useful to them and help them deal with life's problems.
   - This is best achieved if the content of learning materials relates to their own lives.
   - This means the learners' life-experiences and problems should be the starting point - so one needs to learn about people's lives before starting to teach.
   - The learning material should also build on what learners already know - so one needs to find out what knowledge and skills learners already have.

3. **The teaching process:**
   - should be democratic: everyone has a say.
   - should encourage active participation : learners learn by talking, doing, experiencing for themselves.

4. **What should result from this kind of learning?**
   - Learners should not just talk about things in class; they should go out and use what they've learnt to change problem situations in real life.
   - It can help learners to become independent, self-reliant and confident.

selected handouts from session on lesson planning

Guidelines for Small group discussions

1. DISCUSS IN SMALL GROUPS how you try to implement this approach in the classroom and what problems come up when you do it. What's the reality of trying to put this approach into practice?

Think of an example of a lesson or set of lessons where you tried to put the participatory approach into practice and talk about what happened:

How did you plan a lesson?
- What was the process like?
- How did you decide what to focus on? Where did the topic or theme or content come from?
- What did you do to plan the lesson?
- Who helped you?

What happened in the classroom when you tried the lesson?
- What went the way you expected? What went differently?
- How did students react?
- What went well and why? What didn't go well and why?
- What were you comfortable or uncomfortable about?

What happened after the lesson?
- What new ideas did you get that you might pursue?
- What questions did you have after the lesson?
- How did you follow up?
- What might you do next?
- What would help you in following up?
- What do you need from us/the group?

What problems/concerns do you have in lesson-planning?

Wbat is the planning process like for you?
How much time does it take?
Who do you work with? How do you work with another person?
What do you do if there are different points of view, ideas, or conflicts?
What do you need from us/the group?

2. MAKE A PROBLEM-POSING TREE

Use the Cathy's tree as a model for making a group tree that represents a common concern or worry from your group.

3. REPORT BACK TO THE WHOLE GROUP from each group:
   a. Report back something useful you learned from someone else that might benefit everyone.
   b. Common issues/worries or concerns from group (TREE).

High beginner ESL class
Eugenie Ballering

Mo 9/30/91

1. Weekend talk

2. How do you make a doctor's appointment

3. Roleplay ← receptionist / somebody who is sick
Give sickness in their hand.

Tu 10/1/91

1 Discussion about bingo 'doll' game

(2) Discussion about Haiti

(3) Formulating wh questions about Haiti

Thursday 10/1/91

(1) Discussion about the 'news' (Haiti)

(2) Freewriting in blue note book about any topic. If students have a hard time suggest writing about Haiti or health problem. ~~Give~~ & show picture of Aristide and/or health comic picture

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LECCION DEL DIA JUEVES 3 de OCTUBRE :

CLASE DE 6:00 a 8:45 dividida en dos periodos.

LECCION: Los estudiantes recibirán un paquete de lecturas sobre la vida de un niño salvadoreño que vive en los Estados Unidos (estas lecturas son parte de un libro que los estudiantes leerán en el transcurso del ciclo.

* Puntos importantes: a. el niño reflexiona sobre su vida acá en E.U.
b. también reflexiona sobre su vida en El Salvador.

*propósito general:
1. lectura y comprensión de texto
2. Discusión y relación con el mundo de los estudiantes.
- 1. La vida en el campo
- 2. La partida de su madre a E.U.
- 3. Cambio de vida a la ciudad

ACTIVIDADES:

1er periodo:

- Los estudiantes leerán individualmente la lectura que consta de seis hojas c/u con dibujos y un párrafo (varía de tamaño)
- con la ayuda de los dibujos los estudrantes
- posiblemente- comprenderán el contenido de la lectura mucho mejor.

2º periodo:

a) Después de haber leído las hojas, se formarán grupos de 2 ó 3 personas. Cada grupo tendrá a su cargo, releer una pequeña sección de la lectura; luego discutirla con el compañero/a (c.), para luego explicar o presentar esa sección a los demás, seguida de preguntas y discusión.

b) Después que c/ grupo haya presentado, se tratará de tener una discusión del contexto general de la lectura.

c) Si el tiempo lo permite c/estudiante escribirá un pequeño resumen de su sección o sus impresiones de la lectura.

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Reflections

Although it was not our explicit intention, this workshop served as an evaluation device, providing an opportunity to informally assess what interns had learned over the previous months. Their responses throughout the workshop provided concrete indicators of the extent to which they had internalized the underlying principles of a particpatory approach and put it into practice. The first indication of their understanding of the approach came during the brainstorming segment, in which they generated a long list of key ideas which broadly outlined principles of participatory literacy education (including terms like critical thinking, respect, teaching through content, people's contexts, discovering, exploring, addressing issues, problem-posing, codes, issues, using pictures, theater, role-play). As such, this part of the workshop served both as a review and validation of knowledge for the old interns and a basic introduction (coming from their peers) for the new interns.

Second, the problem-posing tree exercise demonstrated the interns' capacity to analyze concrete problems of practice and to generate solutions among peers. The problems they identified are core issues that adult literacy practitioners have long struggled with; the solutions ranged from very concrete ideas to broader social-contextual ones. What was important, though, was that they got ideas from each other - from the resources of the group rather than from an expert telling them how to solve a problem and as such, were applying the problem-posing model to their own learning as teachers.

Third, The group feedback from the problem-posing trees likewise demonstrated the extent to which interns were applying what they had learned in the trainings to their practice. Some of the ideas that interns mentioned as being useful included: games that can be played in multi-level classes; pairing more advanced with lower level students; using dialogue journals (as a way of creating materials that are relevant for everyone but can be used in mixed-level classes), developing photo-stories (again to generate relevant materials); using maps to draw out student experience and knowledge about their homeland. Again, what was important was that these ideas came from the interns; for those who were presenting these examples, the exercise served to validate their own practical knowledge; for the others, it confirmed that they could look to their peers in addressing problems of practice.

Fourth, the fact that an intern was one of the presenters in the final segment on lesson-planning indicated increased confidence on his part and validation of the concept of peer learning. The concept that the interns' practice was worth sharing publicly was reinforced. In addition, it served to rehearse this intern for making more public presentations and to model the process for other interns. As such it was a kind of preview of the next stage of the project in which interns became involved in dissemination.

Fifth, the responses to the brainstorming sessions and to the problem-identification groups revealed again the unevenness in the development of the interns. One sub-group continued to be pre-occupied with mechanical problems (teaching the alphabet,etc.) while others forged ahead with exploring more meaning-centered approaches.

Finally, the problem-posing tree exercise was instrumental in underscoring two important structural problems with the design of the project. The first was the lack of adequate planning time; because interns were only paid for eight hours a week and most were in the classroom for at least six hours (and in some cases eight), there wasn't enough time to meet and work together to do lesson planning. In addition, particularly for the native language literacy classes, this problem was compounded by the paucity of suitable published materials and the resulting need for time to prepare teacher-generated materials. Further, a participatory approach requires tailoring materials to learners' needs and interests in any case (whether it is a first or second language class).

Session 8: Conference Preparation (Nov. 1991)

Objectives

Our project had been invited to make a presentation at a New York City conference to celebrate the 70th Birthday of Paulo Freire. The conference was to bring together practitioners from around the world who were adapting and applying Freire's approach in a wide variety of contexts. We used the opportunity of preparing for this session as an occasion for reflection on our practice. The objectives were:

- to reflect on the strengths of each intern's work and identify one aspect to share
- to design a presentation integrating individual contributions into a coherent whole
- to address logistical concerns about the conference

Overview of the Workshop

1. General questions about the conference (30 min.)

In this section, interns asked questions like: Will Freire be at the conference? How many people altogether will attend the conference? How many people can be expected to attend our presentation? Will it cost us anything? What should we wear? Who will the other participants be? What are the goals of the conference? When will we meet Freire? We discussed logistical issues around transportation, housing, scheduling, who would go, etc. The coordinator, curriculum specialist, two Master Teachers and eight interns were able to go.

2. Examining our practice (45 min.)

Participants met in small groups to discuss their practice, using the following guiding questions:

1. What made you decide to become an intern?
2. What approaches have you used in your teaching?
3. What were some of the successes?
4. What were some of the challenges and difficulties and why?
5. What are some things you have learned so far? (positive and negative)
6. What are some ways to make this project better?

3. Selecting something to share (30 min.)

The whole group reconvened and we discussed which question/questions had provoked a lot of response or a particulary strong reaction in the small group discussion. Each intern chose some topic from his/her responses to the questions to share at the conference.

4. Fitting it all together (designing a coherent presentation) min.)

In this section, we discussed how the various pieces might fit together into a presentation which would give everyone a voice, while at the same time presenting a cohesive view of the project as a whole, reflecting both its diversity and its unity. We decided to organize the presentation around questions similar to those that had guided our dialogue (section 2 above). The format of the presentation is outlined in the description of the workshop (p.24).

Reflections

Reflections on this session are presented with those about the conference presentation itself.

Session 9: Conference Presentation, New York (Dec. 1991)
Challenging Education, Creating Alliances: An Institute in Honor of Paulo Freire's 70th Birthday

Overview of the Session

1. **Why are we doing this project?** Overview of the project and rationale

The coordinator described the overall structure of the project, its goals and rationale. The curriculum specialist then presented the various components of the training (site-based, monthly workshops, mentoring relationships, etc.), the guiding principles of participatory training, the outline of the participatory curriculum development process, the relationship between the curriculum development process and our training workshops, and an example of how we do participatory training (using problem-posing trees to analyze problems of practice).

2. **How is it structured?** Introduction of sites

The Master Teachers gave descriptions of their sites, including its history, services offered, relationship to the surrounding community, kind of students and development of the component (i.e., native language literacy/ESL) at that site.

3. **Who are we and why are we interns?**

Four interns talked about their lives before joining the projec,t including what they had done in their home countries, what their life in the U.S. was like, and why they had become interns.

4. **How do we teach?** (examples from classroom practice)

Two Master Teachers and five interns each presented a brief example of something they had done with their students. Presentations included:

*The development of an LEA story about the coup ousting Jean-Bertrand Aristide (ESL)
*The development of a photo-story about the life of a Haitian family in Boston (Haitian Creole)
*The use of phonetic Creole spelling as a transition to English (Transitional ESL)
*The development of a unit on workplace discrimination and workers' rights (Spanish literacy)
*The use of pictures in sentences for beginning literacy (Spanish literacy)
*The use of syllable families in beginning literacy (Spanish literacy)
*A code about the use of the native language in ESL class (ESL)

5. **What are some problems we have faced?**

In this section, three interns talked about problems of practice. One talked about the question of multi-level classes and the others talked about getting students motivated and interested in a non-traditional approach to learning.

6. **What impact has the project had on us?**

Four interns discussed how their lives have changed as a result of participating in this project. They spoke about gaining a new sense of confidence in themselves, learning how to work with other people, and connecting their work in this country to prior work in the home country. One described his work on the assembly line during the day, saying the project had given meaning to his life - he no longer felt like a mindless robot. Another said that although she had been a teacher of children in her own country, she had hated teaching; this project had made her realize that teaching can be something positive and that she really did want to become a teacher after all.

Reflections

Again, the planning session served as a kind of mid-project evaluation: while the previous session had elicited participants' knowledge about the principles of participatory education, this one focused more on what the project had meant for participants' lives and how they saw their own work in it. Everyone reflected back on why they had joined the project, what they had learned, what aspects of their practice they felt positively about, what limitations and problems had emerged, and how the project had affected them. Through this dialogical process, each participant was able to identify some aspect of his/her work that he/she wanted to share at the conference. As we went through the small group discussions, we looked for 'hot' spots in each person's responses and then incorporated those into the overall framework for the presentation. Thus, although at the beginning of the workshop people were worried that they wouldn't have enough to say to fill a two-hour presentation, by the end of the session they realized how much we had done and that we really had the opposite problem - we had too much to say and would have to select which aspects to emphasize.

Participating in the conference itself was a positive experience for many reasons. First, because people came from all over the world to share ideas and experiences, the participants were able to see our project as part of a larger movement and to see how similar ideas were applied in a variety of contexts. Second, because we drove down together, ate, attended workshops and plenaries, and cultural celebrations together, our group was consolidated with new cohesion and solidarity. Third, because Freire was there and openly interacting with us, people got a sense of the person behind the theories. Fourth, by attending other sessions, participants gained appreciation for their own work: their critical reactions to others' presentations (which in some cases seemed out of touch with the realities of learners' lives) helped them realize the strengths of their own practice. Finally, the debate that was generated through the plenary session deepened participants' thinking about literacy theory.

In terms of our workshop, the experience was also overwhelmingly positive. It was the first time making a public presentation for all of the interns, so they were nervous beforehand; we had numerous rehearsals, etc. When the time came, however, people spoke with comfort and ease; only one intern didn't feel good about her presentation (although the rest of us thought she did well). The presentation got an extremely positive reception from those attending the session, with many participants talking individually to project members afterwards to learn more, exchanging addresses, etc. Someone commented that it was one of the few sessions at the conference that actually talked about how to put a Freirean perspective into practice - addressing the real issues of implementation.

In terms of the content of our presentation, we were initially concerned that the presentation would seem scattered because we tried to do so much in a short time. Further, when interns actually presented their work, it was clear that there was a real range of approaches; in fact, two of the interns focused on very traditional aspects of their work (skills work that was not related to the social context or meaningful interaction). However, in the discussion at the end of the workshop, what emerged was a sense that the range of work underlined the diversity and vitality of our project (rather than seeming scattered). The fact that some interns presented more traditional methods, rather than being seen as a weakness, was seen as an indication of the participatory nature of the project which enabled each intern to experiment and allowed everyone the space to develop according to his/her own comfort level and pace. While early in the project some of the interns had expressed the desire to be told what to do and to be trained in specific methods to follow in class, the presentations underlined the fact that, not only were we not imposing a methodology, but that interns had developed a strong sense of ownership of their own practice and had been incredibly creative in adapting what they had learned to their teaching contexts.

Finally, the conference brought to the surface an issue which had not been openly addressed up to this point. Since many of the other participants at the conference were involved in literacy out of their committment to social change, it raised the question of the role of politics in literacy work. Specifically, the conference pushed us to focus on how comfortable interns were with a social change perspective and to what extent they understood and/or agreed with the rationale for tying literacy to action for social change. This issue was to inform our planning for the next sessions.

Session 10: Where we've been, where we're going

This session will be presented in a different format since its structure differed from that of other workshops. We had invited an outside presenter to talk about literacy campaigns in Latin America as a response to earlier requests. However, the night before the session, the presenter had to cancel for personal reasons. We decided on the spur-of-the-moment to use the occasion to report back and reflect on the New York City Conference, as well as assess past and future directions. The session was thus divided into three parts. First, people who had been to the New York conference shared what they had learned and their reactions with people who had not been able to attend. Second, we talked about what people did and didn't like about the trainings to date. Third, we generated a list of topics for future workshops.

During the part when people shared reactions to the conference, interns spoke with ease and confidence about the sessions they had attended; there was a genuine sense of exchange. Everyone had an experience that they they had something to say about. They were, as Ana said later in the evaluation, being themselves and sharing feelings, owning what they had to say. During this discussion, Elsa asked if people had felt uncomfortable about the fact that there had been so much focus on the poltical nature of literacy work. This triggered a heated discussion, with some people arguing that politics had no place in the classroom, others arguing that literacy is always inherently political, and still others asking for clarification, definitions, or taking a middle position.

During the evaluation of past sessions, people said that they liked both the sessions which we did ourselves and the ones when outside presenters were invited. Some people said again that we should provide more concrete teaching techniques and skills work. There was also a sense that the terminology and readings were at times too technical/difficult to understand; the way things are worded is not always accessible.

Reflections

After the workshop, Julio said that this session supported his belief that formality isn't always the best approach; the fact that we didn't plan the workshop (or that our plan fell through) turned out to be a good thing: it was one of the best workshops we had had. He said that in Haitian culture, when there is a discussion, the way one shows knowledge is by making a statement with a challenge or disagreement at the end of it; in meetings, people take the opportunity to challenge ideas, so that discussions are more self-generating, less pre-planned. The Anglo idea of preparing everything carefully may not work in Haitian society. Thus, this session seemed to him to be more culturally congruent than some that were so carefully scheduled in terms of sequences of activities.

The section on planning future workshops highlighted some interesting contradicitions: in terms of workshop process, on the one hand, everyone participated eagerly and said it was one of the best sessions we had had. Yet, when it came time to think about future sessions, they said they wanted outside experts to come in. In some ways, this is exactly what happens in class: students may say they want the teacher to tell them what to do and to teach traditional grammar lessons, etc., but often the lessons they like best and are most engaged in are the ones that center on a student issues and are least 'traditional' in format; yet, even after they see this, they still ask for grammar the next time.

In terms of workshop content, a similar contradicition arose. People were most engaged in the discussion about politics and said they wanted to explore this issue more; yet, most of the other sessions that were suggested were of a more teaching methods/strategies nature (eg., learning games and techniques for making the transition from Native Language Literacy to ESL). In our staff discussions after the session, we traced this problem (the concern with methods training) in part to the title of our project: because the project is called a ***training*** project, participants bring a training schema to it, expecting that they will learn specific skills and techniques. For the remaining workshops, the project staff tried to address these contradictions by continuing to create structures which integrated substantive presentations in a participatory format and by including content about teaching techniques as well as loaded pedagogical issues.

Session 11: What does politics have to do with literacy?

Objectives

As a result of the discussion at the previous session, it was clear that some participants resisted the Freirean notion of linking literacy work with socio-political analysis and change. This resistance was based in part on their views of politics as relating to wars, political parties, racism, etc. and their feeling that these 'heavy' issues had no place in the literacy classroom. The objectives of this session were:

*to allow participants to make explicit their views about and resistances to politics in the classroom
*to demystify the term 'politics'
*to examine how political relationships are manifested in day to day experiences
*to show how politics enters into literacy teaching whether we recognize it or not
*to demonstrate concrete ways of incorporating analysis of political relationships into literacy teaching

Overview of the session

1. **Introductions** - ice-breaker (20 min)
   Each participant shares two things about him/herself that others in the group don't already know.

2. **Nightmare skits** (45 min)

   a. Introduction of workshop: The facilitator explains why we've chosen to do this workshop. Freire and others stressed at the conference that education is never neutral and that everything you do in the classroom is political. Since not everyone is comfortable with this notion, the purpose of the workshop is to explore it further, to look at how we view politics, and how it relates to literacy work.

   b. Small group discussion of fears: In three small groups, participants discuss their worst nightmares, fears and experiences about bringing politics into the classroom.

   c. Making skits: Each group creates a two minute skit depicting a nightmare of bringing politics into the classroom.

   d. Performing skits: Each group performs its skit.

   e. Whole group discussion: After each skit, the facilitator asks, "What is this nightmare?" (naming the fear) and "How is politics represented or defined in this skit?" She then asks, "Whatelse counts as politics? What else could be called political?" The group considers alternatives.

3. **The Banana exercise** - What counts as politics? (30 min.)

   The facilitator brings in a banana. She asks, "Who thinks that this banana represents a political issue?" She then goes on with the following kinds of questions:

   Where does the banana come from?
   Who grew it? How was it produced?
   What does the sticker on it symbolize?
   How did it get here?
   Who benfits the most from it?
   How does the banana relate to your experience?

   After the discussion of political and economic relationships represented by the banana, the group comes back to the question of defining what is political. The notion that political relationships are embedded in everyday, taken-for-granted objects and experiences is explored.

4. Examining political aspects of literacy materials (45 min)

Two examples of ESL literacy materials from published texts are projected on the overhead. One shows a seemingly cheerful worker who fixes T.V.s without complaining because she needs the money for her rent. It appears to be a rather straightforward lesson with no obvious issue raised. The other shows a refugee being interviewed for a job in a hospital kitchen; although he was a college math teacher, he is offered a job washing dishes. It poses the problem of under-employment quite directly. The facilitator asks the following questions:

What do you see here?
Do you see any political aspects implicit in either of these?
What message do you think each sends?
What is the view of the learner in each?
What is the view of work and the worker's role?
How do you think students would react to each?
What might you do/how would you follow up on each of these in class?

The discussion draws out the fact that there may be an underlying political message in even the most neutral-seeming materials. Although wrapped in a nice story, the TV example seems to imply that the worker has to be quiet even though she is overworked and underpaid because otherwise she will lose her job. In the other story, the discussion questions invite learners to look at the story critically, relate it to their own experience and explore alternatives. Often the political dimension is implicit in the ways learners are viewed, the choices offered them, or the roles projected onto them. Even when we think lessons are non-political, they contain hidden messages about how students relate to their social context (in this case, work) and what they can do about it. Thus, whether or not we recognize it, we are always making choices about politics in terms of what we teach and how we teach it.

5. Connecting politics with teaching literacy: a video example (30 min)

An example from the video series Workplays (SMU Labor Education Center) is shown. The clip is of an Asian man who is laid off even though he has seniority over a North American man. The group views the video and discusses how the tape might be used in an ESL/literacy class with previewing, predicting, listening exercises, vocabulary work, presentation of legal information, reading exercises, etc. The group discusses the power of using a real story (as presented in the video) as opposed to just introducing an abstract political concept like discrimination.

6. What next? Classroom applications (30 min)

The facilitator asks the group to brainstorm about what they have gotten out of the workshop that they might use in the classroom. Participants share any new understandings they have gotten from the workshop.

Reflections

The ice-breaker, although simple, was powerful because it gave people the chance to share something from a part of their lives that group members didn't know about: for example, someone talked about being separated from her husband and someone else talked about being afraid to speak out because of fear of being judged.

The nightmare skits confirmed the core staff's perception that interns were defining politics as relating to 'heavy' and global issues. In one skit, learners are talking among themselves about losing their relatives in war; the teacher comes in and tells them to think about why they are all in the U.S. and can't go home. The students become silent; when the teacher asks why, they say they don't want to talk about it. The second skit was about Martin Luther King; when the learners in the skit react to a reading, a disagreement erupts: one student says there is still discrimination in the world and the other says there is no problem. The teachers changes the subject to food. The third skit, like the first, raises the question of the learners' situations in their home country. In this case, one teacher reads a poem about EL Savador and another, who is not Salvadoran, complains that the content is not appropriate. The teachers start to argue, the first one saying that the second doesn't know anything about the situation in El Salvador.

In each case, politics was defined as addressing global issues that are extremely loaded and was brought into the classroom in a direct and explicit way by the teacher; the teacher seemed to be imposing his/her agenda and students were resisting it. In discussion, interns said that students don't want to talk about politics because it reminds them of their horrible experiences at home (war, killing, losing relatives, fighting); they expressed fear about introducing anything political because it may lead to a fight among students. However, through discussion, participants came to an understanding that the discomfort may arise first, from the way they have been defining politics and second, from the way it was introduced by the teachers in the skits.

The banana exercise followed nicely from the second skit, in which the teacher shifted to food as a "neutral" topic. After going through the discussion questions about the banana (which elicited the notion of the power relations and multinational politics involved in the production, marketing, exporting and consumption of food, we talked about two ways of dealing with 'banana' in a literacy classroom: traditionally, the word would be introduced, broken into syllables and syllable families, and used in sentences. In the second, the presentation of the word would be contextualized in discussion linking the banana to learners' lives (using questions like those we went through together). As such, the exercise showed an alternative to both a traditional mechanical lesson and to an explicitly political lesson.

The discussion of the two sets of materials demonstrated the effectiveness of bringing the social context into the classroom in a problem-posing way. While the first lesson elicited little reaction, the second one (with the college teacher being interviewed for a dishwashing job) evoked immediate and animated response: it represented precisely the situation of several of the interns who had higher education in their homelands and were working in factories or hotels here. As such, it demonstrated how this approach to bringing 'day-to-day politics' into the classroom can trigger communication, generating both language use and critical thinking. The video excerpt evoked the same kind of energetic response. Discussion centered around discrimination against Haitian refugees by the INS, political asylum, the differences in the ways that Haitians and Hispanics are discriminated against. In both cases, participants felt that their own stories were represented by the codes in the lessons. In reflecting on the video, we noted that the force of the response came from the fact that the issue had been introduced through a story that participants could relate to rather than by the teacher introducing a general political concept (like "Discrimination" with a capital D!).

In the evaluation interns said that they felt clearer about the concept of politics and somewhat relieved to find that it can be seen more broadly than as just focusing on heavy issues. They liked the banana exercise because it illustrated the point about the politics in daily life so concretely and helped them to see how we take everyday things for granted without thinking about what's behind them. One criticism the staff had in the post-workshop evaluation was that, while talking about not imposing our views on students and allowing them to come to their own conclusions, the coordinator (me!) did not leave enough time for participants to come to their own conclusions and offered interpretations too quickly. Workshop leaders, like teachers, need to learn to wait for participants to figure things out for themselves!

Session 12: Working with Transitional and Beginning ESL Students
(March 1992)

Objectives

The motivation for this workshop came from the fact that many of the students who had begun native language literacy during the past year were now making the transition to ESL and that several of the interns were now teaching beginning ESL independently. The objectives of the session were:

*to identify difficulties interns were experiencing working with these levels
*to develop a framework and guiding principles for teaching these levels
*to demonstrate a range of techniques for working with these levels
*to demonstrate a process for integrating topics, activities and skills work
*to integrate mechanical apects of teaching with creative aspects

Overview of the session

1. Conference planning (45 min)

The Project was invited to make a presentation at a state-wide ESL educators conference. We spent the first part of this workshop planning our presentation (which was similar to the one in NYC.)

2. Problem identification (15 min)

Participants brainstorm a list of problems encountered in teaching transitional ESL or beginning ESL. In this session, the list included:

*how to explain a new word
*many first languages in the same class
*how to keep students involved, interested
*how to balance repetition with new information
*how to get people talking
*how to deal with students who are expecting a white, Anglo teacher

3. A framework and guiding principles: video and discussion (30 min)

In this section, a video, "The ABC's of ESL: Developing Literacy" (from the New Readers' Press Teacher To Teacher series) is presented. The video focuses on teaching colors to a beginning ESL literacy class.

a. Brainstorming: Before viewing the video, the group brainstorms as many activities as they can for teaching colors to a beginning ESL/literacy class.

b. Viewing of video: As participants view the video, they note each technique and activity that the teacher uses to present colors.

c. Responding to the video: First, participants give their 'gut reactions' to the video, responding to the questions, "How do you think your students would react to this class?" and "What did you like/not like about this video?" Then the group analyzes exactly what the teacher did, listing techniques and activities. They go on to discuss, "What else could you do to teach colors?" and "How is this similar to/different from what you do?", comparing the list generated before viewing the video to what the teacher in the video did.

d. Generalizing to guiding principles: From the discussion of the video and participants' experiences, general guidelines for working with transitional/beginning ESL classes are generated; our group came up with the following guidelines:

- *involve students in choosing the topic
- *start with what they already know: letters, words, L1 literacy, experiences
- *draw out their experiences, stories, ideas (using any means possible: drawing, L1, etc.)
- *use the classroom environment (pictures, objects, space, etc.)
- *encourage students to work together and help each other
- *use non-linguistic, visual support: photos, pictures, charts, time lines, drawing...
- *involve learners actively: movement,physical activity, mime, games
- *combine several activities for the same topic
- *combine speaking, listening, reading, writing
- *provide some structure (chart, model sentences, etc.) but let student provide content
- *make sure English work is meaningful and in context - don't present isolated words unrelated to the topic

4. Presentation on techniques (45 min)

Each of the Master Teachers and the Curriculum Specialist gives an example (with handouts) of his/her work with transitional/beginning ESL students, including:

- *a technique for identifying a topic and developing acitivities related to it
- *techniques for eliciting and exploring student ideas once a topic has been chosen
  - -pictures
  - -clustering
  - -charts
- *time lines: a technique for learning about students' backgrounds, helping them get to know each other and develop language from content related to their lives
- *techniques for following up with ESL vocabulary and grammar once a topic has been chosen and explored:
  - -using the native language as a bridge to ESL vocabulary
  - -language exprience stories
  - -wh- questions
  - -flash cards
  - -copying and matching exercises
  - -cloze exercises

5. Lesson planning (30 min)

Participants work in small groups with others from their site to design activities to identify a topic, elicit student ideas/explore the topic and follow-up with vocabulary/grammar exercises. Because the other segments of this session took longer than expected, we did not get to this segment (however, a workshop that did not include the 45 minute conference preparation could include this activity).

Reflections

The video was used to trigger reaction: it served as a kind of mirror for reflecting on the interns' own practice. It confirmed how much they already know and the strength of their critical framework. In the discussion, interns noted that many of the activities that the teacher in the video did were similar to those they had mentioned in the pre-viewing brainstorming or already do in their classes. They did get new ideas about using physical activities and puzzles to encourage students to work together. One intern especially liked the variety of activities that were combined. However, they also criticized several aspects of what they saw: one intern said that her students wouldn't want to spend two hours working on colors; another said that his students might find the games and teaching style too childish. A key point in the discussion revolved around the fact that the teacher didn't do much to draw out the students' experiences - at the end of the video we didn't know anything about the students (except how to say rainbow in different languages). Several interns also mentioned that these techniques might not work for everyone: in reality, each group is different and it is up to the teacher to try things out and evaluate them.

Most importantly, the video demystified the notion that 'experts' have all the answers or that there is a particular set of techniques that should be used for this level. It made interns realize how much they already know and that, in fact, they may be more in touch with students than 'professional' literacy educators. The fact that they stressed the need for teachers to experiment and evaluate for themselves indicated movement away from the stance of mechanically applying a 'standard' set of techniques and toward inquiry-oriented practice.

From the perspective of the core group, the video seemed a particularly effective tool for eliciting discussion because it was concrete, external, and visual. Because the presentation came from outside our group and was not 'live', participants felt especially comfortable about being critical. They also liked seeing how a 'real' ESL teacher worked and were amazed at what this caused them to realize about their own work.

The presentation of techniques by the Master Teachers and Curriculum Specialist was especially well-received because it was very concrete. Interns particularly appreciated the many handouts. The combination of a broad conceptual framework and very down-to-earth activities was useful. It is also important to note that the interns did not approach the handouts with the view "I can use this in my class..." but rather, "This gives me an idea for something I can develop in my class..." In other words, interns saw both the relevance of particular activities and the importance of adapting them to fit their own situations. Taken together, the reactions to the video and the presentation indicated a significant shift in interns' attitudes: while they appreciated the new information, they no longer wanted someone to tell them what to do. Rather, they saw the techniques as resources to draw on in developing their own curriculum.

Finally, of course, the issue of trying to do too much in a single workshop was particularly evident: in our attempt to address the interns' demand for practical classroom techniques, we probably tried to pack in too much, so that we didn't have time for the segment bridging the workshop back to practice. Nevertheless, the interns who had previously been most concerned with mechanical aspects of teaching felt that this was the best workshop so far because it addressed the needs of low-level students, it included a great deal that could be directly adapted for the classroom and it was relevant not just to ESL, but to L1 literacy as well.

In our post-workshop staff evaluation, this feedback from the interns prompted Byron to ask whether we need to rethink the way we approach the sequence of trainings. While we had started by presenting a rationale and broad overview of the participatory (non-traditional) approach, he wondered if it might not be better to start with presenting the more traditional approach first, allowing interns to try out more mechanical techniques, and then introducing alternatives. He said that they may need to see in practice how the traditional methods work before they can understand their limitations and embrace alternatives. Of course, the dilemma is, do we want to train people to do something that we feel is less effective or start right out with the approach that we support?

Session 13: Games for Native Language Literacy and ESL (April 1992)

Objectives

At the previous workshop, one of the interns had given the group a packet of games which might be used in classes. This prompted the core group to invite him to prepare this workshop with the Curriculum Specialist. Objectives of this workshop were:

*to develop intern leadership in designing and conducting a workshop
*to demonstrate a range of games which participants can use in their classes
*to elicit other games that participants have used
*to have fun!

Overview of the Session

1. **Demonstration of games** (2 hours)

For each game, there are five minutes of explanation, five to ten minutes for playing the game,and five to ten minutes for discussion. Discussion addresses what participants find useful/dislike about the game, how they might adapt it to teach their group and what variations might be developed to teach different content. Games (with handouts describing the purpose, materials, preparation and procedure for each game) included:

*Pictionary (to review vocabulary)
*Do what it says (a board game with index cards - can be used to teach vocab, verbs, etc.)
*Bingo (to review math, vocab, grammar, etc.)
*Guess what I'm thinking (to review question formation)
*Alphabet game (to review alphabetical order)
*Paper bag game (vocab and question formation)
*Category game (vocab and question formation)

2. **Sharing games** (30 min.)

During this time, anyone in the group can share a game (by teaching it to others or describing it) with the whole group. In our session, games included a word search, a mime game for teaching daily routines, a telephone game and a guessing game.

Reflections

Everyone reacted positively to this workshop because it was active, practical and not too cerebral. Of course, the most significant aspect of this workshop was the fact that it was led by one of the interns. Discussion after each game revealed a balance of concern with the logistics of each game (how you introduce it and adapt it for various levels/content areas, etc.) and concern with linking it to a meaningful context. The intern presenter stressed the importance of linking a game to preceding work: for example, a word game might be introduced after work on a story, using key words from the story. He emphasized the need to have a context, saying that if you present words without preparation, students will be lost. For example, in the category game, one group names a category, brainstorms a list of ideas associated with that category and erases the name of the category; the other group looks at the list and tries to guess the category. This game is a way to bring out concerns from people's daily lives; the categories that small groups chose were: unemployment, money, and Paulo Freire; the brainstorming served as a humorous review of concepts we had been struggling with (conscientization, politics and education, etc.)

Session 14: Literacy campaigns in Latin America (May 1992)

Objectives

At one of our first workshops, participants had expressed an interest in examining links between our work here and literacy campaigns in countries like their own. Several interns were thinking not only about working in the U.S., but of someday returning to their own countries to apply what they were learning. We had scheduled an outside speaker who had done extensive work in Latin America on several occasions, but he had been unable to come for various reasons. Thus, at the last minute, we invited a presenter who had been recommended but was unknown to us to talk about literacy campaigns in Cuba, Mexico and Nicaragua. The objectives were:

*to compare Latin American literacy campaigns
*to provide examples of approaches, methods and techniques in each campaign
*to examine changes and evolution in approaches
*to demonstrate one popular education tool used in literacy campaigns

Overview of the session

1. Introduction

During this segment, the presenter explained her own personal history as an immigrant, including experiences with discrimination in school; she did this to explain why she had become interested in popular education and political aspects of schooling.

2. Identifcations/definitions

The presenter asked the group to brainstorm definitions to the terms education, literacy, teacher's role, student's role (as a way to establish a common understanding before proceeding).

3. Conceptualization

In order to introduce general concepts, the presenter shared statements about popular education from organizers of Latin American literacy campagins and asked participants to react to them.

4. Comparative analysis of literacy campaigns

The presenter discussed literacy campaigns in Cuba, Nicaragua and Mexico. She presented statistics about changes in the literacy rates, an overview of how campaigns were organized and some information on her own research in Mexico. She shared examples of materials she had collected and books about literacy campaigns.

5. Role playing and mapping exercises

The presenter had prepared a role play for developing basic objectives for a literacy campaign in a particular community. She had also planned a mapping exercise to demonstrate how to do community analysis. There was no time to do these exercises.

Reflections

The context of this workshop was a difficult one: the presenter had been invited rather late, she wasn't known to the staff and didn't have much training experience. Her interest and background in popular education turned out to be more academic than experiential or practical. Despite the fact that there were several planning meetings between the core staff and the presenter, the workshop turned out quite differently than expected. First, because so much time was spent at the beginning discussing personal histories, eliciting definitions and conceptions, there wasn't enough time for the sections that interns were most interested in exploring. Ironically, this was in part a result of how comfortable interns were with a participatory approach: they jumped right in to heated political debates in the introductory section, challenging the presenter and sharing their own experiences, with the consequence that this section took much longer than planned. Second, the presenter seemed to assume that the participants knew less than they did; in fact, they were much more knowledgeable and sophisticated than she expected. Thus, on the one hand, the section on defintions and concepts seemed very basic to interns (and made them feel somewhat patronized) and, on the other, their questions at times were more sophisticated than anticipated and addressed areas that were beyond the knowledge of the presenter. Third, while the interns were interested in hearing about the practical reality of methods, materials and pedagogical interactions, the presenter primarily presented information gleaned from research. She responded with reference to books rather than her own experience. As such, the workshop was useful in debunking the myth of outside expertise and in reinforcing to the interns how much they themselves already knew.

On the positive side, several interns appreciated the statistical information and the format of the handout (which was set up in an open-ended way, allowing for note-taking on the handout itself). The discussion of Cuba was useful in challenging some pervasive negative images among the Spanish literacy interns. Finally, this session taught us an important lesson about the limitations of inviting someone unknown to do a presentation: unless one of the planning group has participated in a workshop by the presenter and knows his/her work, regardless of the best collaborative planning, it is difficult to predict how the session will go. Further, it is unfair to the presenter to ask him/her to work with a completely unfamiliar group. As planners, we should have allowed for some prior contact between the presenter and participants, as well as giving her a stronger sense of the realities of timing (so that she would have planned each segment more realistically). The session pointed out the responsibility of the core staff: it's not enough to invite in an 'expert' to do a training session - there needs to be planning and preparation geared to the particularities of each group.

An interesting footnote to this session is the fact that the presenter subsequently volunteered as a tutor at one of the sites so that she could get more practical, hands-on experience working in a participatory setting.

Session 15: Assessing Student Progress (June 1992)

Objectives

As the end of the project was drawing near and we were thinking about the impact of our work, we decided to focus on tools for assessing student progress. Objectives were:

- *to identify the range of ways of doing assessment already in use in the project
- *to evaluate these existing tools (advantages, limitations)
- *to present a framework for alternative evaluation in order to broaden the range of tools
- *to demonstrate several alternative tools
- *to evaluate these tools in terms of participants' teaching contexts
- *to develop a plan for implementing some alternative tools

Overview of the Session

1. **What do you already do to evaluate progress?** (30 min.)

The coordinator presents the context of this workshop: As we think about reporting about the impact of this project, what would you say about progress students have made? What can they do now that they couldn't do before? How do you know? Participants discuss these questions in site-based small groups, listing responses on newsprint:

WHAT PROGRESS?	HOW DO YOU KNOW? (Tools for assessment)

2. **What is the range of tools used in the project? What do you like/dislike about each?** (15 min.)

Small groups report back to the whole group: a 'master list' of tools used in the project is generated. The tools are grouped in two categories - formal and informal tools. Two charts are made to evaluate the advantages of formal and informal assessment.

Formal Assessment		Informal Assessment	
advantages	disadvantages	advantages	disadvantages

3. Presentation - What are some alternatives? (with handouts, 30 min.)

a. Summary of critiques: The coordinator summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of formal assessment tools like tests from the lists generated by the group; she then does the same for informal tools. This discussion is then linked to the debate within the field of adult education; the interns' critiques are similar to many of the critiques from researchers. The challenge is to combine the good features of both kinds of assessment - to develop a systematic assessment framework that includes better documentation of informal assessment as well as some formal assessement.

b. Rationale and principles of alternative assessment: The coordinator gives an overview of where the field has come in terms of alternative assessment. She stresses that assessment should be program-based and learner-centered; it should help students reach their own goals, build on their strengths and not just look for weaknesses; it should be connected to learning, rather than separate from it; it should not depend on a single tool or procedure (like a test) but include many kinds of feedback.

c. Organizing assessment: The facilitator presents a general framework for categorizing assessment tools (tools that are used BEFORE, DURING and AFTER an instructional cycle). She presents examples of start-up tools, tools for ongoing use, and end-of-cycle tools.

4. Evaluating alternative assessment tools (30 min.)

Participants divide into three groups and are given a packet of start-up tools, ongoing tools and end-of-cycle tools respectively (one packet per group). Each packet contains at least five examples ranging from more formal (eg., BEST Test items) to more informal (inventories, observation checklists). They evaluate the tools in their packet using the following guiding questions:

*What is this tool? What does it assess?
*How should it be used?
*What do you like or dislike about it?
*Could you imagine using it with your students? Why/why not?
*How might you change it to make it more useful?
*What else do you use to assess the same thing?

5. Sharing tools (30 min.)

The whole group reconvenes and each group presents one or two of the tools it likes best from the packet. They explain what it might be used for, why they like it and how it can be adapted.

6. Action plans (30 min.)

Participants go back to small groups with others from their own site and select something from the workshop that they would like to pursue at their sites. Discussion guidelines are: "Of all the tools and procedures we discussed today, which ones did you especially like/which seemed most useful for your students? Discuss the steps you may take to adapt these tools for use at your site."

Reflections

Ironically, it was in this last workshop that we were able to most successfully deal with many of the training issues we had struggled with throughout the life of the project: the workshop fit nicely with the model of 1) starting with participants' experiences; 2) analyzing that experience by looking for patterns and making generalizations; 3) presenting new information in a theoretical framework; 4) exploring specific classroom activities in-depth and practicing new skills; 5) reconvening for further reflection; and 5) developing an action plan to link the workshop to practice. It combined a very practical, methodological orientation with broader, social-contextual analysis and there was a balance between eliciting, presenting, and engaging in hands-on activities. The logistics were smooth in terms of not packing in too much and yet allowing for a range of participant structures and activities.

The idea of starting with the questions "What can your students do now that they couldn't do before?" and "How do you know?" was effective in eliciting both the formal and informal ways of assessing students. If the question had been "How do you assess students?", the responses would probably have focused mainly on the formal tools. As it was, interns mentioned both formal tools such as spelling tests, dictations, etc. and informal tools such as student self-reports of literacy use outside of class and observation of classroom behavior. Their discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each mirrored the current debate about assessment in the field. They felt that informal tools yielded more accurate, varied and realistic data as well as being more congruent with the pedagogical approach, but that their processes and format for collecting this data were not yet systematic.

In critiquing the tools, interns mentioned that many of the tools were similar to what they already do in a rudimentary way, but much more explicit in terms of analysis of data. For example, they collect student writings in a portfolio but don't have a checklist for periodically analyzing the writings according to specified criteria. They especially liked assessment tools that include pictures, non-verbal formats, charts and checklists because of their simplicity and because they allow for student self-evaluation. They disliked the more formal tools like the BEST test because the scoring was unclear and subjective, it was too difficult for beginning students, patronizing toward testers, and might make students feel bad; in general, they felt it was contrived and unrealistic. They also felt that some of the examples of alternative tools were too long and cumbersome for use with many students; they stressed the fact that teachers don't often have time for extensive written documentation. Overall, they seemed to like many of the formats of the tools they reviewed but wanted to adapt the content to fit the particular needs of their own groups. The specific formats they mentioned pursuing at the sites were: open-ended question format with space for anecdotal information, pictures, checklists, portfolios with checklists, and modified writing samples. They also mentioned utilizing these site-specific tools on a periodic basis (eg., once a month) to get data more regularly.

The workshop ended with an air of excitement and energy; everyone felt they had gotten something out of it that they wanted to try at their sites. They commented that the workshop had helped them to visualize what they had been doing all along, and to imagine how to make it into a more coherent system. They came away wanting to spend more time at the sites developing something more adequate for future use. Of course, the biggest contradiction of this session was the fact that it came toward the end of the project. In retrospect, participants wished that this session had been earlier, so that they could have developed better systems for documenting student progress all along the way. At the same time, however, it was clear that they couldn't have made as much sense of this workshop and known how to interact with the tools critically without the base of experience developed through practice. It was through the process of reflecting back on practice and accumulated progress that they were able to determine which tools might be useful and how to adapt them.

Appendix B: Sample Teacher-Sharing Minutes

Minutes about Dialogue Journals

Haitian Literacy Project - Nov. 27, 1990

Meeting Times: We'll change the meeting time to Friday mornings because Liotha's work schedule has changed.
The next meeting will be Fri. Dec. 7th at 9:00.

Review of minutes: We went over last week's minutes, making the following comments:

-Romeo will make more Creole word search puzzles.

-Marie tried to do the apartment exercise by asking students to draw pictures of their own apartments but they didn't want to draw; only one can draw. When they saw the pictures from the book, they make comments like, "I don't have those things in my apartment; I don't have a big apartment. I only have one room."

Elsa suggested using the exercise to elicit from them what they do and don't have (rather than trying to do the exercise according to the book). Marie could start with two lists:

I do have	I don't have

Then students could continue work on simple present tense by making sentences:

In my apartment I have _____; I don't have _____.

- Marilyn said that she will bring her notebook next time with examples of student stories, etc. She got the Creolebook from Mireille. We also got more copies of Goute Sel.

- Marie said that she had a similar experience to Marilyn's about students being afraid to write on the board. Kerline had asked students to say something about Thanksgiving, which she wrote on the board exactly as they said it. Then, Kerline asked, "Did I make a mistake?" One student said yes, but was embarrassed to say what it was. She didn't want to correct someone else in front of the group. Marie told her not to be afraid to correct...

Dialogue Journals

Elsa started the session on dialogue journals by giving everyone a journal book and asking them to write about anything that had happened since we last saw each other. Then we passed the books to someone else and responded. After the first writer read the response, everyone kept on writing.

First we talked about the process of writing the journals. Elsa noted that the reaction to this exercise had surprised her. She thought we would just write one exchange and then talk about it, but everyone just kept on writing back and forth; it was hard to get us to stop. Elsa asked why everyone kept writing. What was it about this process that made you want to keep going? Some of the comments were: We chose the subject so we had a lot to say. From what she (the first writer) said, I was able to ask a lot of questions. When you really understand what someone is saying you want to answer. It's real communication - not just language practice.

Then we looked at the content of what people had written. We noted that in each case, something very powerful/personal/ real had been communicated. Some of the issues that came up were: Marie wrote about inviting a friend for Thanksgiving and how important it is to be with someone so you're not lonely. Marilyn wrote about celebrating her fifth Thanksgiving in the US and the transition from old traditions to new ones. Romeo wrote about an interesting political discussion that had come up in class. Elsa wrote about the sadness at holiday time because of a divorce in the family. In each case, even though it was quite a short exchange, some important issues came out.

Then we looked at the responses. There were three kinds of responses: 1) asking questions of the writer, 2) sharing something from your own life, and 3) reflecting back to the writer what her feelings were. We discussed the fact that there is some debate about which of these kinds of response gets the most response from students. Some people say it's better not to ask too many questions, because it controls and limits what the writer says in response.

Then we went over some handouts about dialogue journals with guidelines for doing it. Elsa suggested that teachers try it, starting slowing with a few students and giving them the choice of whether to do it.

Then Marie shared a piece of writing which one of her students had done. We tried to 'decode' it together. Elsa asked everyone to respond to it as though it had been an entry in a dialogue journal. How would you respond? Marilyn wrote giving feedback about the students' son. Marie rephrased much of what the student wrote in grammatical English. Romeo said it's hard to know how to respond without knowing the student. He couldn't really understand what she said because her ideas weren't coherent. He said that she didn't understand that when you learn to write you have to follow many steps, learning words, then coordinating words to make sentences.

Marie said that even though there are many mistakes, she appreciates her effort; she's new in the class and other students who have been in the class longer wrote less. She showed us another students' writing which was very simple, with words spelled correctly and better grammar but very short.

Elsa said that these two pieces represent different approaches/philosophies about writing. In one approach, it is important to only write what you can write correctly; the focus is on form, grammar, spelling, etc. In the other, the concern is more with expressing ideas and conveying meaning. If students worry about grammar and spelling, correctness, they often are afraid to write anything and they think they can't write. If we encourage them to write without worrying about grammar, and we respond to their ideas, they will write more and use writing to express themselves. This doesn't mean that we never teach grammar; we can use the journals to identify grammar problems. But we don't teach these points somewhere else, not in the journal. This way the journals can be a place to develop the idea of writing as a form of communication.

Romeo's class

Romeo said that he has decided to work more slowly to be sure students are following. Some students who had been in the morning Creole class and went on to ESL have asked to come back to the Creole class (even though initially they didn't want to learn literacy in Creole) because they don't think their base is strong enough to follow the ESL class yet.

Last week Romeo's class had a very exciting discussion about the roots of underdevelopment in Haiti. One of the students had heard Romeo on the radio and asked him why he never talked about politics in class; they didn't know he knew so much about it. Romeo described the class as follows:

I told them we are underdeveloped not because we make a lot of children. The lack of technology dates from the time of Haitian independence when we separated from France in 1804. WE were the first Black independent republic in the world. The colonialist powers were angry about that. England had colonies in Jamaica and the Bahamas; Spain had colonies in Central America; France had colonies in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Those powers considered Haitian independence an act of rebellion against their interests. After 1804, there were blockades against Haiti because the founders of Haitian independence killed white people living in Haiti. Since this time, the conditions for underdevelopment were created. Th enewly independent slaves were not prepared to help the new nation go forward. Underdevelopment is not a state but a situation. After the colonialists, Haiti was in a geographic area where the U.S. had control. I explained to them how this control works: the superpower sells you the finished product and we sell them the raw materilas. The superpowers fix our price on coffee, sugar, cotton, etc. I gave them statistics from an article: there is one doctor for 10,000 in Haiti; there are 3000 people with a salary greater than $90,000; more than 50% live in subhuman conditions.

Elsa asked Romeo to bring in the article so that we could use it to develop materials.

Marilyn: Marilyn said that her students brought up the idea of doing a play for the Christmas party. They want to do a play maybe about learning literacy. We'll talk more about this next time. Elsa suggested Marilyn ask Guitelle for advice. (Also Jean-Claude Martineau???)

Dialogue Journals, cont

Haitian Creole Project Minutes - Dec. 7, 1990

Marie started by describing what she has been working on: days, dates (pronounciation and spelling); calendar; sounds of the letters of the alphabet in English. She did a word search with the names of the months. She will start the dialogue journals in January.

Marilyn has started doing the calendar in Creole. She links the calendar work with students' lives by asking them their wedding dates, their birthdays, and is teaching them to write the months, dates, etc. She has also taught some mathematics, again linking it to their lives by talking about money; she gives them problems related to real life (eg. If you go to the market and get these items, how much will you have to pay?) The lower level students are able to answer to answer correctly but not to write the answers.

Marilyn said they were very responsive when she introduced the idea of dialogue journals, asking to start right away. She told them they can write anything and she would write something back. She shared some of the students' journals with us.

One student began by writing about Thanksgiving, saying how tired she was and that she hadn't gone out because she was so tired. The kids didn't go out either because they were tired. The next day they went back to school and to work.

Marilyn responded by telling about her own day, talking about being together with her whole family and preparing food. Then Marilyn asked about the students' children - did they like to play and were they doing well in school. The student's response was much longer and more complex for her response to Marilyn. Here is a paraphrase of what she wrote:

Thanksgiving was the best day for her because all the family was together. She was very happy; she prayed to God to give her strength and courage and health. The kids were happy and they went back to school with joy.

Marilyn responded as follows: *I see that you had a good time on Thanksgiving. I asked you before about the kids - if they like to play and if they are doing well at school.*

The student's response to this was quite short: *Yes they like to play, they're doing well at school and they don't give me any problems.* (All of the above are paraphrases rather than direct translations of what was written in Creole.)

We made the following observations about these journal entries.

1. There was a dramatic increase in the length of what the student wrote after Marilyn's first response. Marilyn noted that in the first response she shared her own experience relating to what the student had written and asked a question about the student's kids.

2. In addition, the student had made corrections in her spelling of Thanksgiving even though Marilyn hadn't "taught" it or corrected it in the first entry: Just by seeing how Marilyn wrote it, the student changed her own writing.

3. The student's second response was shorter. As we linked our examination of these entries to our discussion from last week (Elsa asked how it related to our discussion of two types of teacher responses last week), Marilyn said that when she asked questions, she was directing the student's answer. She said that when she asked about the children she had been trying to find a subject beyond Thanksgiving so they could go on with the dialogue; but the answer was shorter. Marilyn noted that in the first response she shared about her own Thanksgiving, relating her own situation to the students' writing. Elsa asked how Marilyn could accomplish her goal of finding another subject without directing the answer. Here are some of the ideas to deal with this:

- Marie suggested asking how she likes school.
- Marilyn said she is thinking about writing something about herself.
- Marie suggested telling a story.
- Elsa said there might also be other ways of asking questions that are less directing/more open: she could ask something like, "You talked about your children. Can you tell me about them?"
- Liotha (who had not been part of our original discussion of dialogue journals) suggested using her responses to work on spelling, taking words out of the journal to teach.

We talked about the importance of not just focusing on the form of entries in dialogue journals, but responding to the content, and that this in itself could indirectly help students with spelling.
We compared three ways of responding to incorrect spelling:

- Direct correction
- Pulling out mistakes and teaching them in a lesson.
- Modeling correct spelling in your response.

We decided to look at the student's writing to see if she had made any changes in her spelling just from the modeling Marilyn provided. We focused on the word children and noted that she had gone through three stages of development in spelling it:

1st draft: *ti nu yo*
2nd draft: *tinoun yo*
3rd draft: *timond yo*

[The correct spelling is *timoun yo* (did I get this right?).]
We saw that she was using Marilyn's response to work toward better spelling- it was affecting both the CONTENT of her writing (which was longer and richer) as well as the FORM.
Here are some of the entries that other students wrote (again paraphrased, not translated directly):

Life is very difficult here. It's hard for someone to succeed. I don't do anything. I can't work.

Marilyn responded first by sympathizing and then by asking her what she does do - Does she watch TV? go out? visit her friends?

The response was: *When I don't work, I stay home, do the housework, and also I am looking for a job. I don't want to stay home. I go to church and pray to God to help me and give me hope because without God nothing can happen (go forward).*

Another student wrote about the elections in Haiti:
Life is a pain for poor people. If poor people don't pray they won't understand the life. Dear friends, listen to what's goin on in Haiti now. How is it? We have to get together to make it work. Dear friends, we can fight for Haiti. If you are Haitian, GET UP!

Another student wrote: *The situation here is difficult. It 's difficult to find work. People are working with their arms crossed; they have nothing to do. That makes the kids have problems also. They are thinking a lot. They cannot go to school. They cannot eat like they should. The parents cannot pay their rent. They sleep in the street. They have a lot of problems. They don't have money.*

Marilyn asked if students wanted to write something to submit to the journal and they said they had already written something that wanted to submit. As we thought about it, we realized that the word journal is the same as the word magazine in Creole so maybe that was why they were making the association that they had already written something for it. Altogether we were very impressed and moved by their responses, one of which even brought tears to Liotha's eyes.

Dialogue Journals as tools of evaluation: Since everyone liked the idea of the dialogue journals so much and was so impressed with the students' work in them, Elsa suggested we try to do them with all the students in January as a way of documenting progress through the semester. Elsa will bring enough journals for everyone to have their own.

January changes: Elsa told everyone about the interview with Eugenie and that she would be at the Dec. 15th meeting so everyone could meet her. We talked about Marie's ESL class in January. We will see if Kerline wants to become an intern. Elsa will talk to Carol, Jean-Marc and Kerline about this. Marie wants to volunteer to work with some of the literacy students. We'll try to figure this out. She will work with one student who is having trouble at her house for two hours a day during her vacation!

Liotha's class: Liotha like the idea of dialogue journals and wants to start right away. However, because it's winter, close to the holidays and the class meets at night, attendance has been uneven. Elsa suggested she ask the students to write about what makes it difficult to come to class in their journals. But Liotha said this might not be relevant for everyone since many of them come to class regularly. We came up with 2 questions to get the dialogue journals started in her class:

1. What makes it difficult for you to come to class?
2. Write about what's on your mind.

Some of the students have been telling her, "Before I didn't know anything, now I know more because you have tried so many ways to help us learn." Liotha has shifted from doing choral reading (everyone reading together) to individual reading, calling them one by one to read for the class. They can do this now - when they see a word they can read it. Marilyn and Marie have done the same thing this week! Liotha's class wants to work on Math: they say, "When I go to the market, I don't know how to read the price." She has begun working on reading numbers. She also is working on telling time, reading the clock.

Classes start on Jan. 14.
We will have a workshop on Sat. Dec. 15 (9:00-12:00)
Our next meeting will be Friday morning, Jan. 11th (9-11). We will use that time to talk to Eugenie and Julio about the project, to orient them and to figure out schedules.

Dialogue Journals, Cont.

HMSC Literacy Project Minutes - Jan. 25, 1991

Update on babysitting: Julio went to all the classes and asked for ideas about what to do about the children coming to class with their mothers. He presented it in terms of the mothers' sacrifices in coming to class - how difficult it is for them to get up earlier, etc. Everyone suggested the same thing: hiring a babysitter. One woman asked if she could have the job. Marie said that the space near Henry's office is a possibility. One student asked how we would pay - but this wasn't discussed much. Julio will investigate exactly how many women/children would need a babysitter and at what times.

Driver's Permit: Marilyn said that there are at least 15 students who have expressed an interest in getting their permits. Julio will ask his friend with the driving school to come to the center to teach a class; he will probably do this since he is a community-minded person and will get some business from this. We can also ask him to make a donation to the center in return - perhaps we could ask him to support the babysitting! (He could charge a small fee for the class and give some of it back to the Center).

Liotha's Dialogue journals: Liotha was unable to come but sent in her students' journals. She had asked the students to write about what made it difficult for them to come to class. Here are some of their responses:

> One student wrote that she likes school and doesn't want to miss one day; when she misses a day she knows she's losing a lot. Everyday is different. Her problem is that when she's getting off the bus to go home, she feels there's a danger because her neighborhood is not good.
>
> Another wrote that it's not a car problem for her, but a babysitting problem.
>
> Another wrote that she has no problem; she likes school and only misses when she is sick. She doesn't live too far so she can walk.
>
> One student brought in a journal which obviously had been written by someone else (her husband); Liotha told her to do it herself but the next time it was still written by someone else. The husband said he had just done the writing, but it was the wife's thinking.

Kerline said she had also asked students to write in journals; they asked her what she was going to do with them - would she corrent them, write entries on the board, etc.

Elsa asked everyone how they would respond to this question - what are the possible things they might do with the journals?

The ideas we generated are listed on the next page.

Ways to respond to students' journal writing:

1) Rewrite in correct form (exactly what student said) and return to student. (This is what Liotha did).

2) Correct what the students wrote (correct *their* writing). This is what students seemed to be expecting when they asked Marilyn what she would do.

3) Put entries on the board and correct them as a group. Julio has done this and says inevitably, students are able to find each others' mistakes without any direct teaching by him - they help each other.

4) Have students share their journals with each other and correct each others' mistakes.

Elsa noted that each of these approaches focused on correction: the response was primarily to the form of what students had written. She asked what possibilities there were for responding to what students had said - to the problems they raised.

5) Focus on the issues from the journals for class discussion and then literacy work. There are many ways of connecting the issues to literacy/ESL work.

*Key words: Romeo said that he might ask the students to discuss/ share problems raised in the journals; as they are talking, he listens for key words which he writes on the board; then he breaks them into syllables, and asks students to form new words from them.

*Vocabulary: Kerline said that she starts every class with a brief conversation in English. For example, one day she asked, "Is everyone in a good mood today?" They then discussed "good mood;" one student came in late and said she felt sick; everyone started talking about how they felt, telling stories about the what had happened at home. Kerline wrote vocabulary on the board and came back to 'good mood.'

Elsa asked what you do after you identify issues and key words and work on the mechanics? What about the original problem that prompted the discussion and literacy work?

6) Address the original issue that the student raised in the journal. Very often one student's problem is also the problem of others (eg. babysitting, safety). Elsa said that in Freire's method, you start with the issue, discuss it, do some related literacy work but always come back to the problem - the whole point is to provide a context for addressing the problem. If you don't get back to how to address the problem, you're reducing their concerns to an excuse for doing mechanical literacy work. This doesn't mean solving the problme for students. There's a distinction in Freire's work between problme-solving and problem-posing: in problem-solving, the teacher fixes the problem for the student which keeps students powerless to take charge of their own problems; in problem-posing, the teacher is a facilitator who helps to identify/find a problem and re-presents it to the class and helps to structure the discussion, but the students relty on each other to come up with ways of addressing the problem. This is what Julio did when he went back to the classes to get their ideas about the babysitting issue rather than just solving the problem himself.

There are many ways of incorporating the literacy work (key words, copying, modeling, group work, vocabulary, and the others we've mentioned) but in problem-posing, even if the *form* of the literacy work changes, the overall *process* is the same:

Start by finding issues and discussing them.
Do some literacy work.
Come back to the issue.

7) Respond to individual journals in terms of content only: Marilyn said that she writes a short note back about what the student has said; she uses *their* with correct spelling to model the correct form, but focuses on meaning so that 'we can continue the dialogue.'

Kerline said that she responds in terms of her own experience. For example, when one student wrote that she cooked over the weekend, Kerline wrote back that she hated cooking. She said that when you respond by talking about the subject, students write more. It's a conversation, not just ocrrecting, but sharing things.

Julio asked if you should underline mistakes; he was concerned that if you don't make the corrections explicit, students won't notice them and change their own writing. Kerline said that sometimes she makes a note of one or two things but doesn't make any negative comments about the whole thing. If something is really incoherent, she says, 'I don't understand what you mean; can you tell me a different way?' Julion stressed that we should draw their attention to the correct spelling. Elsa said that even if they don't incorporate all of the correct forms you have modeled, they will make some changes and gradually, over time, the amount and quality of their writing will improve.

Romeo said that this raises the issue of what is most important: is it important that they are comprehensible or that they are grammatically correct. Should we focus on grammar or communication? Kerline said that in her experience, if they haven't had much schooling, and aren't familiar with grammar concepts in French/Creole, they won't understand if you focus on grammar; she models the correct forms, but doesn't stop/interrupt the discussion to teach grammar.

8) Use the journals to develop the curriculum: Eugenie asked if the teachers have group discussions about the issues that come up in the journals. This raised the point that the journals can become a source of curriculum materials. From the journals, we can get topics for discussion, key words, reading materials, etc. Elsa said that if you use a student's journal, you always need to ask them first if it's ok - to get their permission. Elsa said that we don't need to see the journal only as a place to work on writing, but also as a place to work on reading; Liotha's student whose husband wrote for her might be getting something different from the journal process - a reading text. Elsa said that some entries could become texts for the whole class with students' permission. Eugenie took one of Liotha's journals and will type it as a text for the class.

Math: Kerline said some students want math so she does a half hour every day; Tom will start an 11-12 math class.

ESL in literacy class: Julio's students said, "Today is Thursday, we're supposed to do ESL today." This raised the issue of incorporating ESL in literacy classes. Romeo said there's a big difference between ESL and Literacy. In the literacy class we need to follow a curriculum to prepare students for ESL I; in ESL, more conversation is OK.

MANY TOOLS IN CLASSES

HMSC Literacy Minutes, Nov. 15, 1991]
Present: Julio, Champtale, Marilyn, Carey, Harrry, Marie, Elsa, Eugenie

1) Budget: $123
10 for lock
$113

2) Teacher sharing

Carey: Carey has been doing **dialogue journals** on Thursdays. When he started with the journals, students always seemed to write about what they did on the weekend ("I got up at 7; I went to church; I cooked dinner" etc.). Now he provides another time during class for them to write about their weekends so they have begun to write more interesting journal entries. One student wrote about the fear he has to stand in front of a group and speak. Carey chooses the most interesting entries and copies them for the whole class; then they correct them together at the board.

He no longer tries to have a specific days for particular activities (eg. Monday grammar, Tues, reading, etc.). He starts by asking students what they want to do. If something has jsut happened in Haiti, he uses it as a **cnde**.

He has also been using **Voices** as a text: he starts by having the class read it, they then pick out vocabulary to work on; they then make another **language experience story** from it, using the vocabulary and ideas; then they do a dictation to test their knowledge of the vocabulary.

Evaluation: He says that students have made great progress in their use of the verb tenses, especially past tense. He sees it their journal writing.

Harry: Harry has been using **Goute Sel**: most of them can read it fluently now, so he uses it for other things (beyond reading) like spelling. For example, students have been working on filling words they have studied into sentences with blanks. He has also been giving them **proverbs** : they discuss the proverb in groups and then give their interpretation. Then Harry gives his interpretation. They also do **math** several times a week.

Evaluation: Many (about 12) of Harry's students will need to move on to ESL I in January. They are reading Creole fluently now.

Champtale: Since Champtale has the 6-8 class (last class in the evening), attendance has declined since the weather is colder and it's dark earlier (and the upheaval in Haiti?). She has been giving the students cards with pictures (a set of pictures which she found in the cabinet). They are **pictures of loaded situations**, crime, violence, people doing drugs; she has the students discuss them in small groups with **mixed levels**: those who can't write yet tell the others their interpretation of what 's happening in the picture; the more advanced students write the stories. She is also working on word formation: she goes over new words on Wednesday and on Thursday she gives out cards with the letters; she then asks students to form as many words as possible with the letter "A" for example. Then they make phrases with the words.

Julio: Julio has been using the **Kreyol/English tapes** he discovered (it turns out that Champtale has also been using these tapes). Students sometimes say the English words before the tape says them. The tape is helping with pronounciation of English, even for people who are already more proficient in English. Julio thinks that we should think about making our own version of these tapes in the future.

More discussion of Goute Sel: Champtale thinks there needs to be a Goute Sel II, for more advanced students. Marilyn says it's too hard at the beginning, too easy at the end. The jump in difficulty between page 2 & 3 is too great; there aren't enough exercises between them so she makes her own.

Marilyn's photostory: There has been some debate about the ending of the story. Julio feels that the book seems to be preaching immorality: it seems to promote gambling, as well as irresponsibility. He said that he feels our responsibility as teachers is to encourage students to maintain a level of morality here in the U.S. Marilyn talked to her class about this after the initial discussion of it at last week's meeting. The students feel strongly about wanting the husband and wife to be together at the end of the book. There are some new students who weren't involved in the original writing of the book, so she'll continue the discussion this week.

Elsa asked if there is more of a break-down in morality after people move here to the US. Everyone said that this is definitely true: in Haiti, people live in a community where they know each other, there is a strong sense of family and religion, but once people are here, there are many pressures on them and the social fabric tying them together is less strong. Elsa asked if there is a way to bring this out in the discussion - to look at the underlying social causes of the 'immorality' in the story: why are the people acting the way they do? why do people feel that gambling is the only hope for a better life?

So there seem to be **three positions** about the story:

1) The story should be left just as it is because it presents the situation as it really is in many students' lives and because they wrote it that way. It's their story and their reality. It is an accurate depiction of the reality of their lives. This is something Cathy Walsh talked about: that as teachers it's not our role to change what students want to say. It's their story and should be left as such.

2) As teachers we have a responsibility to provide a positive model for students; the message of the story seems to promote (or at least not challenge) an immoral way of acting. If it is left as it is, it will leave students with a message that is negative. Harry suggested that we think about the South African story: it ends with a more positive message.

3) We should think about how to present it so that students consider the underlying reasons that the social fabric breaks down in the US; we should try to present a way for students to analyze why families split apart and people rely on gambling here. We should try to use the story to promote dialogue about the conditions of people's lives, so that it elicits a more critical understanding of their social reality. But how would we do this?

We decided we don't have to resolve this dilemma ourselves; we can ask students what they think and also share this debate with people at the various conferences we're going to attend.

Kreyol Seminar: We discussed the possibility of a Kreyol seminar in January. Julio says that at least ten people must be guaranteed to attend.

Proverb Book: The **proverb book** is done and ready to be printed.

CAL: The CAL people doing the video will come on Nov. 25. The ESL people need to discuss what they want to do with them.

Master Teachers
Meeting

Literacy Project Core Group, June 21, 1991

Evaluation of Workshop with Klaudia Rivera (Theater and Literacy): Participants at the Haitian Center enjoyed the workshop; Champtal, the new intern, tried some of the exercises in her class. She decided to do it because everyone seemed down when they came to class one day - worried about finding work, etc. She started with the warm-up and explained what she was doing at each point: the warm-up was a way to loosen people up, get them motivated and less distracted by their worries. Then she had the class divide into two groups and explained that the exercise was a way to help them get started with a dialogue/story (they were having trouble deciding on what they wanted to write about). Each group chose a word that had social meaning for them (the words they chose were pov and maladi - poor and illness). One group acted while the other reacted. Then she wrote sentences on the board from what they had seen and described. She'll follow up on Monday with a code or story based on their sentences. Others at the Haitian Center said they liked the workshop because they had never thought about theater as a way to teach literacy before, that they liked the fact that Klaudia had them participate actively, not just listen to her. Marilyn said she wants to follow up more and discuss ways that theater work can be linked to literacy - how she can use what we learned in class.

Byron said that he hadn't had time to go into detail with the interns about their reactions to the workshop but that they said that they had enjoyed it because it was active. Elsa said that she had talked to Laudize who said that Estelita had called her and told her how great the workshop was (some informal feedback). Byron also wished we had had more time so that K. could have gone into more detail.

Ediane had asked Elsa to bring a chapter of Boal's book; Elsa brought copies for everyone, but Byron said he didn't think the interns would read them - that they didn't read the handouts even when they were in Spanish. So there seems to be some unevenness in terms of who does/doesn't want outside readings.

July Meetings: Because of the Aguirre visit and the July 4th holiday, there will be little time to meet to plan a workshop for July. We discussed two options: the first is organizing an informal dinner/potluck meeting for Saturday night, July 13th (the day we were going to have the workshop) at Elsa's house. The second is attending the brunch for practitioners with Freire on Sunday, July 28th at Leslie College. Elsa wasn't sure if we would be able to attend the brunch but will check with Donaldo if we can contribute a lesser amount than the original proposal and just have people attend optionally. **Teachers will ask interns if they want to do the party on Sat. July 13 and if they want to attend the brunch.** The next planning meeting for the Core group (teachers only) will be on Friday, July 12.

East Boston: Byron started by saying it's a hard time of year because of the holidays, graduation, etc. He feels that this disrupted the continuity this week. He also said he was concerned because it seemed that students didn't listen to each other: he asked them to make a list of themes of things they wanted to write about, but when one person gave an opinion the others didn't listen. This was upsetting - Elsa suggested that he make a code about this and bring it back to the group to discuss - so the burden is off him and shared with students. Then he went on to say that they had done the following activities at his site:

*Writing: They have been having interesting discussions about what to write about; they want to write about imaginary/mythical creatures; many say they've met these creatures,

had experiences with them. For example, El Duende is a little man with a big hat who pursues women and bothers them; the only way to get rid of him is to play the guitar. One student said that in his village in El Salvador they once had to have a party for two weeks to get rid of a spirit that was trying to get a woman. On Monday, the class will write a story together about one of these experiences as a model for students to write their own stories.

*Letter exchange: They have received a letter back from the teacher of the students in NYC who they had written to. The NY students are composing their replies and will send them next week. The students are very excited about this.

*Slides of Mexican art: This week Byron showed slides of Mexican art before the Spanish invasion (mainly Aztec). Elsa asked why he decided to do this. He said that many of the students come from Indian or mestizo background. Earlier, when they had been talking about Indian words that had influenced the Spanish language, one of the interns noticed that the students said they didn't like to talk about Indians. Byron said that in El Salvador (unlike Guatemala), Indian culture has disappeared. He wanted to bring something in that would not offend them but would provide a context for talking about Indian culture, by showing something from another country. An ESL class joined them when he showed the slides and were very involved, but the Spanish literacy students didn't react as much.

*Field trips: They often do field trips in the summer. The first one will be to the Museum of Fine Arts; it is free for educational groups if you apply two weeks in advance and fill out a form. They'll go on Wednesday night since that's the only night it's open. Elsa noted that Byron started by saying he was discouraged but then went on to describe all the interesting things they were doing.

Jackson-Mann: Ana said that some of the interns are really ready to teach on their own now. Elsa asked why they had been paired the way they had (since the two that are more comfortable about teaching are together; she thought it might make more sense to pair the less comfortable ones with the more comfortable ones). Ana said that they made the decision themselves and that she felt that it was the only pairing that really would work: the two perfectionists were together and otherwise the interns would have driven each other crazy.

Elsa said that this points out an important flaw in our model: the design is that there are three training cycles (during the first, interns would mainly observe and assist the Master Teacher; during the second, they would work along with the Master Teacher; and during the last, they would co-teach with another intern). But the reality is that interns are ready to teach at very different points: some are ready when they start because of prior experience (for example, Champtal had volunteered in Marilyn's class for four months before joining the project; the new intern at the Haitian Center, Harry, had his own adult literacy school in Haiti); some aren't comfortable with being on their own until even beyond the second cycle. Thus, the model should be revised to allow for more flexibility. Further, the ten month limit on the training means that just as people are becoming experienced and comfortable, they are terminated. Both of these aspects need to be re-thought as we proceed.

Next Meeting: July 12 1991

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Appendix C: Sample Evaluation Tools

Middle OF Cycle Oral Review/Evaluation.

B II

(1)

Names: Everybody introduces/himself/herself.

•

•

•

•

•

•

•

•

Where's he/she From? and whatever seems interesting or relevant.

(2) What's in this Picture:
Please give me adjectives describing this Picture.

2.A) What's in this Picture?
(Same as above)

2.B) Show the two Pictures.
What's different between the two?

Is Your Family Smaller than . . .
" " " bigger than . . .

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(3) "My Wife doesn't Work"

Is this Woman working? Why? Why not?

What's She doing at _____?

Students pick a time and ask each other the question?

(Please write answers down exactly the way Ss answered.)

(4) What are you doing at _____?

Ss ask each other the same question choosing different time.

What's _____ doing right now?
Ss ask other Ss @ people in the other groups.

(5) Ask Ss the following questions. (please)

Is it harder for you to live in this country or in your country? . Why?

What is easier for you: To talk in english? to write in english? or, to read in english? .

What country is farther from the U.S. Argentina or guatemala?

When is english more difficult for you: When you talk at work? With people on the street? At restaurants and stores?

(6) How do you like Boston?
(Ss Ask each other the same question)

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How do you like this class?
Why?

What can we change in the class to make it better?

Coments (your own observations. take your time)

HMSC

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION
KREYÒL LITERACY

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1) DEPI KILÈ OU KÒMANSE KOU APRANN LI E EKRI AN KREYÒL?

2) KISA OU AKONPLI?

3) KISA OU TA RENMEN APRANN PLIS?

4) NAN KISA OU SANTI OU PI FÈB?

5) NAN KISA OU SANTI OU PI FÒ?

6) KISA PWOFESÈ A FÈ OU RENMEN?

7) KISA POWFESÈ A FÈ OU PA RENMEN?

Translation of Creole Literacy Evaluation Questions

Name: _____

1. How long have you been learning how to write and read Creole?
2. What have you accomplished so far?
3. What other things would you like to learn?
4. What are your weaknesses?
5. What are your strengths?
6. What do you like about your teacher?
7. What don't you like about your teacher?

Jean-Marc used the following process with this questionnaire:

1. He wrote the questions on the board.
2. Students discussed the questions as a group.
3. He wrote their responses on the board and used them as a literacy activity.
4. He handed out the typed questions for students to think about at home.
5. They responded individually on the form.

Remarks of evaluation discussion HMSC

Byron asked if others had suggestions about evaluation. He said that he didn't want to do a formal evaluation but wanted to find out what students could read - if they read street signs, etc.

Julio described the activities he had done the first week to get a sense of where students were. He described three kinds of activities: a discus- sion of the war, alphabet recognition and word formation activities.

He said when controversial subjects come up it's important to try not to influence students with your own opinions. Students tend to thing that whatever the teacher says is right because the teacher is the authority. He says it's not right to tell them, for example, "I think Bush is wrong" if they ask what you think; you can tell them what you know and understand but avoid imposing your own view.

The following is an excerpt from the minutes of the HMSC meeting describing how he did these activities.

The alphabet: He started by putting the letters of the Creole alphabet on the board; [in another meeting he mentioned that he also talked about the fact that different languages have different alphabets.] He asked students to come to the board and underline the letters they used in their names; he did this because from talking to Romeo he knew that everyone could write their name. They like this because they all could do it; it was a way to let them show him what they do know. Some students underlined some of the letters twice; when Julio asked them why, they said, "Because when I write my name, I use that letter twice."

Word formation: The next day Julio talked about making words; he started by explaining what a word is: It's more than a group of letters: xwyz is a group of letters but it's not a word because it has no meaning. What's important is not how many letters are together - a word can be made of just two letters - but it has to mean something. Then students made their own words.

Evaluation of the lessons by the students: Students were happy with the way classes started. They liked the fact that Julio started at the beginning. One student explained it this way: It's like if you're teaching math. If you start with multiplication and nine out of ten students understand it but I am the tenth, I would be too embarrassed to tell you that I don't understand. But if you start with addition, I wouldn't feel bad about asking you to explain.

Elsa said there were several things which she thought were important about the way Julio had done the evaluation:

1). He integrated it into the teaching, not making it a separate test. Literacy students (and everyone else!) have a great fear of tests and doing testing at the beginning might scare them away.

2) He started with ideas (eg. the war), immediately sending the message that literacy class (and literacy) is not just a mechanical activity; it is meaningful and related to what's interesting in students' lives.

3) He started with something very simple that he knew students would be able to do so they could show what they know, not what they don't know. He chose names intentionally because Romeo had told him everyone could write their name. When students wrote their names, he said to them- *"Do you realize what you can do? In Haiti 8 out 10 people cannot write; Don't worry if you are an adult and are just learning how to read/write; Toussaint L'Ouverture knew how to read and write for the first time when he was 40 years old."*

4) He contextualized the more mechanical aspects with talk about literacy: he didn't just work on the alphabet, but talked about why alphabets are the way they are; he didn't just elicit words, but talked aobut what makes something a word; he also connected the mechanical aspects to a Haitian cultural context - looking at what students could do in the context of Haitian education and history.

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Appendix D: Sample student writing

LEA STORY - HMSC
AUGUST, 1990

Pwogram Alfabetizasyon
(The Native Language Literacy Program)

Nou te vini nan St. Leo pou nou aprann li ak ekri. Nou nan fènwa. nou bezwen limyè. Ayiti nou pat gen okazyon pou nal lekòl. Lèn vin nan peyi meriken nou konprann enpòtans lekòl. Elèv yo nan klas depi yon mwa pou rive a sèt mwa. Youn nan elèv nan klas la di li gen yon mwa la a e li kòmanse konn li ak ekri. Kounye a nap travay sou yon nouvo metòd: nou pran yon kodak nal pran foto nan lari ki enterese nou. Avèk foto sa a nou vin nan klas epi nou travay sou li. Nou reyini ansanm na klas la e nou etidye tout sa ki nan foto yo. Nou tire sa ki enpòtan nan foto yo pou nou kapab fè yon leson paske sak soti nan noumenm pi bon. Nou diskite leson an e pwofesè a ekri mo nou yo sou tablo a. Sak enpòtan nan metòd sa li pèmèt tout moun patisipe nan travay klas la. E konsa nou te réalize foto yon lekòl.

Klas Alfabetizasyon 11.30-1.30

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Dec. 1990

MEZANMI

Lavi doulere pou malere anpil. Si malere pa lapriyè yo paka konprann lavi-a.

Mezanmi tande peyi Haiti ki jan li ye. Ann nou mete tèt nou ansanm pou nou ka fè peyi nou an mache byen.

Mezanmi ann nou lapriyè pou 16 Desanm pou nou ka genyen batay la.

Mezanmi si se ayisyen nou ye, leve kanpe.

Sonia Joseph

****

Mwen wè mwen chagren paske mwen abitye ak timoun-yo tròp.
Mwen chagren paske se premye fwa mwen voye yo an Haiti poukont yo.
Men mwen wè yo te kontan ale Haiti, yo te kontan paske yo te an vakans e mwen profite voye yo an vakans an Haiti.

Ivanne Antoine

1991

Liotha St. Pierre, 6-8pm.

TRAVAY

Nap chache travay lontan nou pa ka jwenn. Nou gen problèm anglès, nou pa konn ranpli aplikasyon. Estet la fè defisi, a koz de lagè ki sot pase a. Yap revoke moun, yap koupe nan lè travay, yo pa di nou viv, yo pa di nou mouri. Kòm nou pa ka rete chita la kay, nou toujou ap Mache al ranpli fil tout kote nou konnin. Nou mande zanmi pote aplikasyon pou nou yo di nou wi men san zespwa paske yo konnin yo pap pran moun. Desisyon nou nap priye Bondye fò pou nou wè sa na jwenn sinon, deyò yap mete nou, menm kay nou, nou pap ka peye.

all ayitiens Together

Mwen ta renmen gen yon changman an ayiti. Paske twop pitit bondye ap mouri inosan. Sitou, mwen gen you pitit nan poto prens, chak fwa mwen tande nouvel sa yo, se you lot tranchman vant mwen genyen.

Conte Consulta

moun gode bra bable
tab chemin chien che'
moun Wè Wou gason a pyè
pou pyè bra
Wouti gason qui a gé mou
tab la ran pli mange
bébé qui quin be Wou
moun Wè ti bouque
flè a tè a flèri
papa qui mete min ni
ran poch an pil feil
ti moun ap fé rann
go blé gran mèr canpe
la cou pi clo tire

Mabiti Desables

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KREYOL

Aristid

STUDENTS

Marquise Pascal.
Vertida Almesa.
Odette Magny.
Emmanuel Fevrier.
Marguerite Francois.
Armante Clermont
Mamortel Telfort
Macelie Boval
Eve Louine
Mariana Guerrier
Nelia Destin
Irma
CLASS: kreyol (9-11am)
Teacher: JULIO

Aristid se yon kado Bondye ban nou pou nou men'm pep ayisyen paske li kon'n doule pep-la. Nap kontinye priye pou li pou Bondye kapab ede'l nan tout sa lap fe.

Koulye-a map tan'n yon chanjman pou Ayiti. Chanjman sa-a se pa prezidan selman ki pou fe li se nou tout ki pou mete men ansanm ak prezidan-an pou sove peyi nou. Nou mande lape pou peyi Dayiti paske gen anpil makout ki ap fe move zak toujou nan peyi-a Aristid se yon kretyen ki tap ede pep ayisyen depi lontan. Sitou pou moun ki pa gen opotinite pou yo pale pwoblem ke yo andire, sitou mechanste ke gouvenman ki pase yo te fe. Koulye-a, Aristid se prezidan peyi-a men makout vle bay anpil pwoblem toujou. kom nou men'm pep ayisyen, nou kon'n sa nou vle; nap toujou kenbe fem ak prezidan-an pou nou voye Ayiti monte. Aristid resevwa anpil menas lanmo, men kom se Bondye ki te mete li anyen pa kapab rive li paske vwa pep-la se vwa Bondye.

Kreyol (9-11)

July 1992

AYITI

* * *

Ayiti se yon ti peyi solèy ki gen anpil bèl bagay la dan li. Nan tan lontan pou moun ki te konnen Ayiti se sa nèt tèlman li te yon bèl peyi. Tout moun te kon'n ap viv alèz menm si yo pa te genyen lajan. Men apre tout sa Ayiti fi'n pase si yon moun pa te konnen Ayiti depi lontan ou pa janm konnen si Ayiti te yon mèvèy. E byen, nou dwe pose tèt nou kesyon eske Ayiti pap tounen menm jan li te ye tan lontan.

Thank you Teacher Marilyn and all the other teachers.

Kernita Thomas

My country is Haiti, it is not very large. The population is about six millions people. It has beautiful mountains, the beautiful houses, gardens and beaches. It is a tropical country.

I have been traveling around the world for four years. Every place I visited I was always with my country. I don't think there is any country which is beautiful like Haiti.Of beauty is what it's called by those educated, respectful, and mostly intelligent people who live in it. The view makes them want to live every day.

I like Haiti because the weather is nice. Many people like to visit it because it is a hot country to enjoy their vacations.

Felito Paul

* * *

MIYAMI vs. BOSTON

Lavi Miyami reyèlman byen. Miyami fê bon, fè cho, ou soti jan ou vle, ou relax anba pye bwa, ou pa bezwen boure, maske, esepte novanm ki fe yon ti frèt. Tanperati-a tankou Ayiti. Tout sa ou bezwenou jwen'n li. Manje yo pa tèlman chè. Ou jwen'n tout pwodwi tropikal. Ou gen dwa fê biznis nan kay rezidansyèl. Kominote Ayisyen an gran anpil. Boston li menm gen bon lekõl. Lekol yo pi enteresan ke lekòl Miyami. Li gen yon bon pwogram bileng. Men sa ki deranje mwen se fredi ya. Mwen pa renmen fredi. Lontan te genyen travay nan tout kote-ou, Boston ou fê'm dekouraje.

Clairemante Loristaine.

POU KI SA MWEN KITE AYITI

Men pou ki sa mwen kite Ayiti peyi mwen. Se paske mwen te pè "Tonton Makou yo. Yo maltrete lòt moun. Paske mwen konn wè jan yo maltrete moun apre mwen. Mwen kite Ayiti, mwen pase anpil mizè nan baz naval G uantanamo, mwen te fè 2 mwa la, epi ankò mwen tè fe 4 jou san mwen pa te manje. Apre sa, sa yo te kraze tout tant yo. Mwen te pase anpil mizè, apre sa yo te fè entevyou avè'm. Avan mwen te vini Boston. mwen te fè 14 jou Miyami. Mwen ta renmen travay, mwen pa kapab jwenn travay, sa ban'm pwoblèm paske mwen kite dèyè, mwen pa abitye rete san travay, sa ban'm pwoblèm pou tout vi'm. Men malgre tou mezanmi mwen pa te ka rete anba rejim krazezo sa-a.

Oremio Romain

* * *

Mwen te nan komite katye ki te sipòte Aristide nan eleksyon ki te fèt 16 Desanm 1990. Mwen te vini yon konseye nan komite-a. Mwen te bay tout kouraj mwen de 5 . Fevriye nan tout seremoni-an. Se konsa vini gen yon kou deta ki fèt 29 Sektanm 91.

Mwen twouve pèsekisyon nan katye mwen, lapolis tap chache pou arete mwen. Se konsa Vandredi 22 Novanm 1991 mwen moute a bò yon ti bato. Samdi 23 Novanm vi nou te an danje, nou te gen anpil pwoblèm, nou kanpe nan wout Samdi a Dimanch. Nou vini fè voyaj Lendi a 4 e di maten, Lendi 8 e gad kòt ameriken arete nou. Apre 5 jou, li rantre avèk nou nan pò Guantanamo 29 Novanm 91.

Nou te pase 3 jou nan pò-a, Lendi 2 Desanm 91 nou desann bato-a solda ameriken mete nou nan yon bus pou nou te ale nan kan-an Guantanamo. Mwen te pase 5 kan diferan nan baz Guantanamo avèk anpil mizè mwen te pase. Mwen pase 32 jou nan baz la. E se konsa 3 Janvye 1992, mwen rantre Ozetazini.

Wilnick Augustin.

TRANSLATION OF PHOTOSTAT

Haitian Multi-Service Center
Adult Education/Literacy Project
Teacher: Marilyn St. Hilaire

KAMI MASLEN'S LIFE

by Kreyol Class (4-6PM)

Antoine Ilvanne, Consulta Conte, Joseph Derat, Agathe Jean, Ynette Jean, Sonia Joseph, Clairmanite Loristaine, Carmen Lormeus, Marie Merise, Camelia Richard, Celecia Rocher, Marie Suneus, Kernita Thomas, Lucianne Vilmont, Yolande Volcimus, Lilianne Altidor

KAMI MASLEN is a thirty year old man. He married Mariz Maslan 8 years ago. Kami and Mariz have 3 children: 2 daughters, Selin and Jaki, and a son named Masel.

When Kami and his family were in Haiti, they had a very comfortable life. Kami was making his own money without working hard. He had money, he was a self-employed person, he was his own boss. He didn't have to get up early to go to work. He had many servants, he had nothing to do at home, and he didn't have too many bills to pay.

Kami thought that life was easier in the U.S.A. He sold all his goods and all his estates and he came with his wife and children to the U.S.A.

Kami came to America. He started to encounter many problems.

First, he has a language problem. He does not know how to speak English. He has problems finding work. He cannot make any phone calls. Kami was sick once, he went to the hospital, he was in pain, he couldn't describe his pain.

Finally he found a housekeeping job. But he didn't like it. He worked very hard and he wasn't well-paid. His boss doesn't respect him, he talks to him too harshly, he humiliates him, he is prejudiced. All these things affected Kami's work. His work is never well-done.

Kami is always sad, he is always thinking, he has difficulties adapting himself to the system.

Kami is thinking about his children's education. Selin, Jaki and Masel don't like school. They don't want to study. They like rather to watch television. They are turbulent. They make noises all day long. They even broke a window and the house does not belong to Kami.

Kami has sentimental problems. He cannot live with Mariz. They are not compatible. Mariz is rude, she does not respect anyone. Kami doesn't like to go out, he doesn't like to party. Mariz doesn't like that about Kami and she also doesn't like to cook or do housework. She only likes to party. Kami doesn't trust Mariz because many people gossip about her being unfaithful to him sometimes.

Kami cannot hear English at the workplace. Every time his boss talks to him, he doesn't understand. He cannot go to school to learn English because he doesn't have time to do so, he has to take care of his family. Kami is not used to this kind of job. So he doesn't perform in his work. He answers badly to his boss and one morning they fired him.

Kami lost his job, he is broke, he has more problems. Mariz herself doesn't treat him well at all. Selin, Jaki and Masel do not listen to him. Kami kept saying to Mariz that his situation will change, to be patient. Then Mariz met Jozef at her job. Jozef had a lot to offer her: money, beautiful things... And one day, she left Kami for Jozef.

Kami kept on living with sadness in his heart.

One day while he went for a walk, he met a friend called Rosnel. He explained his situation to Rosnel. Rosnel encouraged him, talked to him, gave him support, and also gave him $20.

Kami went somewhere, he saw many people playing the Mass Million, so he combined 6 numbers and played.

How lucky Kami was! While watching television that night, his numbers were pulled out. He won!

Kami went crazy, his dream has become true.
He is a millionaire.
All his economic problems were resolved.
He is a millionaire now.

On the other hand, Mariz has learned about the good news. She wanted to go back to Kami. She was full of remorse for having to leave Kami. She wanted to go back to him. She asked Kami to forgive her, she asked him to allow her to come back home.

Is it too late for Mariz?
Does Mariz deserve forgiveness?

And then Kami for the sake of his children Selin, Jaki, and Masel, gave Mariz a last chance.

I like the school because I was visiting a freind every day I went to New Jersey shopping during lunch time

---

yours truly
Jessica

Lundi 26 novembre 1990
on recoltes a session aux a semi
Thanks giving histesy home
Tuesday my in me e family is soem no-
class festevil ordy me in matieu dinner
at five soem a y me dinth lendi in mathieu is
valcusnfiveon he is cline my e qicksin I
love mathieu he very help me he ave ten is
ocl he give my very help. Mercredy after h
orcloque a y me open maye food a ivenare
maye food for maye beboy after h orcloque
a I me finiche prepare maye food I ofa se (
mathieu veronie cynthia sit in the te bot
I me prepare rice lemon testibens sose
I ave three testing give my e me lucid on a ya
Tue tuesday afternoon

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LCM - Beginning ESL Class

Women's life in Haiti

The life of woman in Haiti is very hard. First, women have to get up early every morning, because she has to do household work like cooking, doing laundry, taking care of the children and doing the market. Specially, the women from the cities. Second, the women from the country side, not only they have to do house work, but, the also have to work very hard in the farm. For example, they put the seeds in the soil and during harvest they do most of the farm work. Third, Haitian women are abused by men. They get the women pregnant then they leave her, some women have to look for another men to take care of this newborn baby with no father. Finally, this situation is upsetting the women of our society. This situation revolt women and create the feminine movement. AFAB is struggling for equal rights for women

3/11/92

Story of Men's Life in Haiti

The life of men in Haiti is different from women. First, men have more time to go to school because in the morning they don't have anything to do in the house. They get up, take a shower, eat breakfast and go to school. As a result they are more educated than women. Second, usually because of their good education the men find better jobs. However the men earn more money. So that the men feel above the women. Maybe this is not true because the men make more money for the women. So that's why the woman want to claim equal rights. On March 8, women celebrate International Women's day.

ESL I Class (9-11), Carey Dardompre
Haitian Multi-Service Center

(4)

Dusable was born in St Hare, Haiti. He was mulatte because his father was a white man married to a Haitian slave. Dusable went to school in France. His father sent him to New Orleans to start a family business. He moved to St Louis, another French colony. Dusable moved to Peoria, Illinois. He married an Indian woman and became familiar with Pontiac, a great Indian chief. In 1769, he started to travel between Peoria and Canada. The Indians called the place where Dusable started his business Eschicago. Today the second largest city of America. Founded by Dusable.

ESL I (9-11), Carey Dardompre
Haitian Multi-Service Center